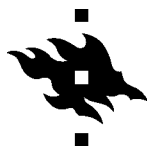


HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

How is spoken English assessed in Finnish lower secondary schools?

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Master's thesis
Master's programme in English studies
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September 2019



Tiedekunta – Fakultet – Faculty Humanistinen tiedekunta		Koulutusohjelma – Utbildningsprogram – Degree Programme Englannin kielen ja kirjallisuuden maisterohjelma	
Opintosuunta – Studieriktning – Study Track			
Tekijä – Författare – Author Oinonen, Heta			
Työn nimi – Arbetets titel – Title How is spoken English assessed in Finnish lower secondary schools?			
Työn laji – Arbetets art – Level Pro gradu -tutkielma		Aika – Datum – Month and year Syyskuu 2019	Sivumäärä– Sidoantal – Number of pages 56 + liitteet (13 sivua)
Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract			
<p>Suullinen kielitaito on tärkeä osa-alue vieraiden kielten opetuksessa. Koska suullinen osaaminen on osa Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteita, voidaan olettaa, että suullista kommunikaatiota opetetaan ja arvioidaan yläkoulun vieraiden kielten opetuksessa. Tutkielma tarkastelee englannin suullisen kielitaidon arviointia suomalaisissa yläkouluissa. Tutkielmassa analysoidaan On the Go - oppimateriaalisarjan valmiita suullisia kokeita. Tutkielmaa varten haastateltiin myös neljää yläkoulun englannin opettajaa.</p> <p>Tutkimus suoritettiin analysoimalla kahta eri aineistotyyppiä. Suulliset kokeet analysoitiin deduktiivisella sisällönanalyysillä jakamalla tehtävät kategorioihin tehtävätyypin mukaan. Suullisissa kokeissa oli neljä eri tehtävätyppiä, jotka ovat ääneen lukeminen, roolileikit, sanojen selitys ja tuottamistehtävät. Seitsemännen ja kahdeksannen luokan kokeissa aiheet olivat lähellä nuorten arkielämää, mutta yhdeksännen luokan kokeissa aiheet olivat vaativampia ja abstraktimpia.</p> <p>Tutkimukseen osallistui myös haastattelun muodossa neljä yläkoulun englanninopettajaa. Haastattelut toteutettiin touko-kesäkuussa 2019. Haastattelut nauhoitettiin osallistujien luvalla, jonka jälkeen ne litteroitiin ja käännettiin englanniksi.</p> <p>Haastatteluaineisto kuvaa eri opettajien metodeja englannin kielen suullisen osaamisen arviointiin. Kolme neljästä opettajasta järjestää suullisia kokeita esimerkiksi erilaisten haastattelujen avulla. Yksi opettaja ilmoitti käyttävänsä oppimateriaalien valmiita suullisia kokeita. Yksi opettaja ei käytä lainkaan suullisia kokeita, vaan arvioi suullista kielitaitoa oppituntien aikana.</p> <p>Opettajat käyttivät omia arviointiasteikkojaan suullisten suoritusten arvioinnissa. Yksi opettaja kertoi arvioivansa esitelmät numeerisella arvosanalla. Opettajat suosivat sanallista arviointia, jotta oppilaat tietävät omat vahvuutensa ja heikkoutensa. Opettajien mielestä viestin välittyminen on tärkeää, kun arvioidaan suullista kielitaitoa. Yksi opettaja kertoi kiinnostävänsä erityistä huomiota ääntämiseen, kun taas muut opettajat ilmoittivat yleisen sujuvuuden ja ymmärrettävyyden olevan tärkeintä.</p>			
Avainsanat – Nyckelord – Keywords Suullisen kielitaidon arviointi, kommunikatiivinen kieltenopetus, englannin kieli, suulliset kokeet			
Säilytyspaikka – Förvaringställe – Where deposited Helsingin yliopiston kirjasto			
Muuta tietoja – Övriga uppgifter – Additional information			

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1 Introduction

Spoken language is important, because one of the first skills that people learn in life is speaking. When learning foreign languages at school, speaking is not usually the skill that is taught first. It is common that in foreign language teaching the focus is mostly on learning to write and learning the correct grammar, and the exams are usually written exams (Tergujeff & Kautonen 2017). In Finland this is about to change, because children will start learning their first foreign language at school in the first grade when they might not be able read and write, so the focus has to be on learning to speak and listen. There seems to be a controversy between the importance of spoken English and the way foreign languages are taught, and this controversy inspired me to study the methods of teaching, testing and assessing spoken English in Finnish lower secondary schools.

The Finnish National Core Curriculum (Finnish National Board of Education 2016) sets goals for foreign language teaching and one of the goals is to be able to communicate in a foreign language and express opinions both in a written format and orally. As it is expected that oral proficiency is taught in foreign language teaching, it can also be assumed that oral proficiency is somehow tested and assessed.

I am interested in teaching materials and what kind of oral exams the teaching materials provide. The series *On the Go* (Daffue-Karsten, Haapala, A-M. Ojala, S. Ojala, Peuraniemi, Semi, Vaakanainen 2016-2018) was chosen for this study, because it is a new series and it has been published for the new National Core Curriculum. The *On the Go* series is published by SanomaPro, a big teaching material publisher in Finland, so it can be expected that *On the Go* materials are in use widely in Finland.

In addition to the teaching materials, I am also interested in assessment in practice and what different ways there are for assessing oral proficiency. I interviewed four teachers who teach English and other languages in lower secondary schools. I asked the teachers about how they teach spoken English, what kind of oral exams they have if any and how they assess spoken English.

This study answers the following research questions:

1. What kind of oral exams are there in *On the Go* teaching materials for lower secondary school English?
2. How is oral proficiency assessed in lower secondary schools?

Question 1 is related to the publisher's teaching materials. I study the quantity of the oral exams and also the task types that appear in the oral exams. This study also aims to find out whether teachers use the ready-made oral exams or whether they have their own oral exams or other testing methods. Question 2 is about both testing oral proficiency and assessing speaking.

2 Background

This chapter is divided into five subchapters. In section 2.1. I will briefly introduce the concept of communicative competence and communicative language teaching. I will discuss oral language skills testing and assessing and introduce some methods with which oral skills are usually tested in section 2.2. Also, task types of oral tests are covered in section 2.3. The context of Finnish schools is introduced in section 2.4., where the National Core Curriculum and its goals for English teaching are presented. In section 2.5. I introduce some previous MA-theses and studies that are relevant to my thesis.

2.1 Communicative competence and communicative language teaching

Language skills and language proficiency are commonly seen as the ability to communicate and cope with communicative situations. The term *competence* was originally introduced by Noah Chomsky (1965), and it was then described as a combination of language performance and accuracy. The term competence was further developed by Hymes (1972). He stated that competence is “the most general term for the capabilities of a person” and that competence includes both the knowledge and the ability to use a language (Hymes 1972, 282). The term competence was then combined with the term *communicativeness*, as communicative competence includes the skills to use language in a communicative way, the knowledge of how to produce comprehensible sentences and focus on the situations in which language is used.

Hymes’ ideas were later developed by Canale and Swain (1980). Canale and Swain introduced a division to three separate competences: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence. Grammatical competence includes the knowledge of syntax, semantics, morphology and phonology, and a grammatically competent person knows how to produce grammatically correct language. Sociolinguistic competence combines language skills and knowledge of sociocultural norms and rules. Sociolinguistic competence is about knowing how to use language in different situations. Strategic competence refers to

the communication strategies used to cope with difficult situations in communication, e.g. not knowing the vocabulary, insufficient language skills, hesitation and misunderstandings.

In the 1990s, Bachman and Palmer developed their model of communicative competence that is largely based on Canale and Swain's 1980 model, but Bachman and Palmer's model was designed for language testing. Their idea of language use is a concept that comprises language interaction and the communication between language users. Bachman and Palmer's (1996) model of communicative competence is divided into five different components. *Language knowledge* can be considered to be quite the same as grammatical competence in Canale and Swain's model, because it includes the notion of a person's knowledge about the language and its structures. *Topical knowledge* is the person's knowledge about the different topics that they might cover when communicating with other people. *Personal characteristics* is the background of the person, e.g. age, sex, native language and place of residence. As Canale and Swain, also Bachman and Palmer include *strategic competence* in their model, but in addition to that, Bachman and Palmer's model includes the notion of *affective factors*, which means the language user's emotional responses to the situation in which communication happens. They tested their theory in language testing situations and examined which of these components affect the testing situation and performance the most. They found that all of these affect a test-taker's performance somehow, but they are not linked together. It depends on the test task type whether a test-taker uses their topical knowledge or language knowledge while talking (Bachman & Palmer 1996, 61-63).

Communicative language teaching (CLT) is a method of teaching foreign languages with the target of communicative competence. CLT is based on the original ideas about communicative competence by Chomsky and Hymes, and it was further developed in the 1970s and started to gain ground in foreign language teaching. William Littlewood (1981) wrote an introduction to communicative language teaching with the goal of helping teachers to understand the method of CLT better. As Littlewood (1981, vii-ix) puts it, students must be able to do more with a foreign language than just knowing the grammar and manipulating the structures, they must be able to use the structures in real life situations, too.

Before CLT, foreign language teaching focused more on grammar and vocabulary than communication, but when teachers were introduced to this new communicative method in the 1970s and 1980s, the orientation shifted from grammar to new purposes of language use (Richards 2006, 9). Teachers and learners started to think about possible situations, settings

and events in which language can be used and started adapting these situations to communicative teaching. The roles and skills of language users were also considered, without forgetting the teaching of grammar and vocabulary (Richards 2006). The important change that happened in foreign language teaching was that the focus changed from accuracy to fluency. According to Richards, activities that focus on fluency include the following features:

- Reflect natural use of language
- Focus on achieving communication
- Require meaningful use of language
- Require the use of communication strategies
- Produce language that may not be predictable
- Seek to link language use to context (Richards 2006, 14)

As can be seen from the list, activities that focus on fluency aim for communication, and they emphasise the speaker's spontaneity, the importance of natural and meaningful use of language, communication strategies and the context in which language is used. The most frequently used activity types in CLT are the following: role-play, interviews, information gap, games, language exchanges, surveys and pair work (Banciu & Jireghie 2012, 97). These activity types are also frequently used in language testing and are more thoroughly introduced in section 2.3. The main idea of communicative language teaching is that language is learned through communication, which is why communication and communicative exercises should be an essential part of L2 lessons (Richards 2006). Communicative competence in language teaching concentrates on that the speaker knows how to speak in the foreign language and has the courage to speak it and manages to pass the message so that the receiver understands it (Hildén 2000).

In communicative language teaching, the focus is on fluency rather than on accuracy. At the beginner level it is enough that the speaker gets understood, but at a higher level accuracy is also a part of fluent communication (Jaakkola 2000, 151). For example in academic working places it is important that a speaker is both fluent and accurate in order for them to be taken seriously. Jaakkola (2000) also writes that advanced students need to be provided with training on accuracy as well.

2.2 Testing and assessing speaking

As speaking and interaction are an important goal in English teaching, those skills should also be tested and assessed. This phenomenon is called *washback-effect*, which means that what is tested is also taught and vice versa (McNamara 2000, Bachman & Palmer 1996). Currently there are no guidelines in Finnish lower secondary schools of what should be tested and whether it is obligatory to test at all, but as oral interaction is an important aspect in the National Core Curriculum for Finnish schools, it is expected that teachers test and assess oral skills.

2.2.1 Testing

Oral tests can be difficult to plan and administer, because they usually take up more time than written tests (Underhill 1987, 11). Some resources that are needed in oral testing are people, time, space and equipment. Nowadays it is possible to organise computer-based testing, as will be the case in the oral part of the Finnish matriculation exam. It is also stated, that a successful oral test “allows students to be treated, and to behave, like ordinary human beings” (Underhill 1987, 11-12), which is why the ideal is a test situation with another student or the teacher, and not a computer. Of course, the new technology allows to develop language testing, which has already been done in upper secondary schools in Finland, as the Finnish matriculation exams are completely digitalised. Most of the exams in lower secondary schools in Finland are still not in a digital format, and I assume that most teachers do not use a digitalised oral exam.

According to Bachman and Palmer (1996, 11), when a teacher wants to design a language test, the language use situation and tasks should be planned carefully to suit the needs of the test taker. A language test should be planned so that it is appropriate for the test-takers and the interlocutors. According to Milanovic and Saville (1996), the authenticity of oral test situations has been criticised by researchers and test interlocutors, because the use of language in a test and outside a test can be very different. That should also be considered when scoring the tests, because the test situation is not a natural language use situation and it increases the test-taker’s nervousness (Milanovic and Saville 1996). According to Chalhoub-Deville (1996, 55) an ideal oral test is a performance-based test where the student gets to use various language skills and apply their skills in a situation that is close to real life situations. This often requires more than one task type in a test so that the test results are valid.

2.2.2 Assessing

Assessment is the process of evaluating someone's language skills and proficiency, and it is usually performed on students by a teacher. Speaking is the hardest of the language skills to assess, because often it needs to be done immediately in the situation of the test, and because there are many factors that influence the speaking skill and its assessment (Alderson and Bachman 2004, x; Luoma 2004, 1). In assessing speaking, the interlocutor has to pay attention to many features; pronunciation, accuracy, fluency and communication. The task types and the setting of the test also have an effect on the candidate's performance. The test format can be paired or individual, and the interlocutor can be the student's own teacher, or someone else, which may affect the candidate's level of nervousness during the test (Luoma 2004, 1-4). If the oral test is in a paired format, it needs to be taken into account when assessing the students' talk, because the pairs may inadvertently affect each other's performance in the test (Brooks 2009, 341-342).

When designing an oral test and its assessment, the first thing that is considered is usually the task types and how different tasks are rated (Luoma 2004, 171). There must be certain criteria for assessment set before the test, but the assessor must decide whether the criteria are the same for all tasks or if they want to use some criteria for certain tasks and some for the other tasks. It is important to decide how to score the tests, and how to give a grade because test scores help the assessors make decisions about the test-takers (Bachman & Palmer 1996, 193).

2.2.3 Analytic vs. holistic assessment

According to Tuan (2012), *analytic assessment* means that the performance that is assessed is divided into smaller features that are assessed separately, producing scores for each of the different features. Some features that are commonly assessed in analytic assessment of speaking are content, organization, cohesion, register, vocabulary and grammar (Tuan 2012, 673). For example, the common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), which is commonly used in assessing speaking, is an analytic assessment scale. CEFR assesses the following features of speech: range, accuracy, fluency, interaction and coherence (Council of Europe 2001, 7). Analytic assessment has been proved to be more successful in helping students to improve their speaking after a speaking test (Tuan 2012). The analytic scales give the learners more feedback about what they can do to improve than a holistic score. The

analytic approach, however, has some disadvantages too, because it is time-consuming. The assessor must also make multiple decisions during the assessment process (Tuan 2012).

Holistic assessment means assessing the performance as a whole and giving only one grade of the performance (Tuan 2012). The holistic approach has been said to be inadequate to help students to improve their speaking skills, because the feedback it gives is not as detailed as in analytic assessment. In terms of reliability, holistic assessment is not the most reliable method of assessment, because the assessor might have a good overall impression of someone's speaking, but when scored analytically, some flaws e.g. in grammar can be seen (Tuan 2012, 674).

2.2.4 CEFR and the grading scale in Finnish schools

When assessing oral proficiency, the assessor usually uses some kind of grading scale. A grading scale that is used in Europe for assessing skills in foreign languages is the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The scale is created by the Council of Europe. The CEFR scale is divided into three main levels, levels A, B and C. Level A is the lowest, beginner level, where the language user survives in the most essential and easy situations. B is the 'independent user' level where the language skills are on a level where the user survives independently in many communicative situations. C is the highest, expert level, where the user can use a foreign language even in the most complex situations. Each of these levels are further divided into two levels, the lower and the higher level, e.g. there are levels A1 and A2, with level 1 being the lower and 2 higher. There are also sub-levels to these sub-levels, as they are also divided into two levels, e.g. level A2 has a lower level A2.1. and a slightly higher level A2.2. For clarity, the levels are displayed in Table 1.

CEFR level	CEFR label	User level
C2	Mastery	Proficient user
C1	Operational efficiency	
B2	Vantage	Independent user
B1	Threshold	
A2	Waystage	Basic user
A1	Breakthrough	

Table 1. CEFR levels (Council of Europe 2001, 23)

The CEFR scale is used in Europe, but it works as a reference also in the Finnish National Core Curriculum for the assessment of foreign languages. A student with good skills in English (numerical grade 8) at the end of comprehensive school is on level B1.1. in both understanding and producing language but also in terms of cultural knowledge (FNBE 2016). According to the CEFR levels, a student on level B1

- Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.
- Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken.
- Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest.
- Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. (Council of Europe 2001, 24)

A student with good skills in English at the end of comprehensive school can understand the main points of texts and speech, and can produce speech about familiar and interesting topics and talk about their everyday life. Students in grades 7 and 8 that are on the lower CEFR levels can talk about the most essential topics, e.g. school and free time (Council of Europe 2001). According to the assessment in the Finnish National Core Curriculum, a student on level B1.1. at the end of comprehensive school can use communication strategies and can cooperate when interacting with another speaker. They also know some rules of politeness and turn-taking (FNBE 2016).

Finnish schools use a grading scale from 4 to 10 with 4 being the lowest grade and 10 the highest. Finnish schools use continuous assessment during the school year and end of term assessment and end of year assessment (FNBE 2016). Lower secondary schools usually use numerical grades 4-10, but also verbal grades are used in some cases, for example if the student's mother tongue is not Finnish. Verbal assessment is also used as a method of continuous assessment (FNBE 2016). The grades 4-10 have the following verbal explanations: 4 (fail), 5 (adequate), 6 (moderate), 7 (satisfactory), 8 (good), 9 (very good), 10 (excellent) (FNBE). Grades are given by teachers, but teachers are encouraged to use multifaceted and continuous assessment methods such as the students' self-assessment or peer assessment (FNBE 2016).

2.3 Test formats and task types in oral tests

To test speaking in a way that considers all features of speech requires the speaking tests to have more than just one task type. With the different task types, it is possible to assess the different features of speech and make the assessment more diverse and reliable. It was originally argued by Brown and Yule (1983) that there are four types of informational talk: description, instruction, storytelling and opinion-expressing or justification. As described in this section, many of the tasks in speaking tests are around these four categories. It is useful to use varying tasks in a speaking test, because a candidate may be proficient in one task type, but not that proficient in another task. For example, a student may be good at describing things, but opinion-expressing or comparing things might be difficult. It is thus vital that a speaking test includes multiple task types to test the candidate's skills as diversely as possible (Luoma 2004, 31-32).

2.3.1 Test formats

According to Luoma (2004), whether the speaking test is paired, individual or a group test, also plays a role in designing a speaking test. They all have good and bad sides, and some types suit some learners better. The most frequently used of these types is the individual format, where the examiner interviews the student (Luoma 2004, 35). It is said to be successful, because it gives the opportunity to modify the test to give the students the best opportunities to succeed in the test. It is, however, criticised for taking a long time to interview and assess many students. One of the weaknesses of this test type is that the

examiner has the power in the test, meaning that the examiner is an authority and their language skills are better, and the examinees might find this unpleasant (Luoma 2004, 35-36).

Speaking tests can also be done in pairs, which might make the interaction and speaking more natural, but has some disadvantages too (Luoma 2004). The speakers' abilities to communicate in a foreign language affect the pair's language too. Paired test format may be more useful than the individual one, and usefulness should be an important factor when planning a language test (Bachman and Palmer 1996). The paired format saves time if compared to the individual format and the assessor does not have the role of an interviewer, but only the role of the assessor. However, the interlocutor has to assess two test takers at the same time, which is more complex (Luoma 2004). If the partners' language skills are on different levels, they might not reach their best performance in a test, because the one with the lower level might not understand everything and the one on the higher level cannot speak as skilfully as possible (Luoma 2004, 36-38). However, students usually perform better in a paired test than in an individual test (Brooks 2009, 350). Testing in pairs or small groups is a suggested format by researchers, as they have a positive washback-effect, because the format is similar to classroom activities. The paired or small group tests also give the opportunity to use a wider range of different tasks than individual testing (Brooks 2009, 344-345).

According to Luoma's analysis (2004), group tasks are generally well perceived by students, but they have some issues too. There must not be too many examinees in a group, because everybody has to be able to attend the discussion. That is why the examiner needs to control the size of the groups, and also the group dynamics. Group tasks are quite easy to administer, if the examiner knows the group. Group tasks are suitable for a school class where the students know each other, and the teacher knows the group dynamics (Luoma 2004, 39). According to Brooks (2009), group tasks or paired tasks are said to lead to a more symmetric communication between the test takers and they leave more room for the students to show their skills. The test takers' language is usually more varied in a paired or grouped test than in an individual test (Brooks 2009, 345). However, there might not always be an equal opportunity for all test takers to show their speaking skills, because there might be dominating roles in groups (Iwashita 1999).

2.3.2 Task types

A typical task type that is used mainly in the individual tests but also in paired tests is a structured interview (Luoma 2004). Structured interviews have questions that have been planned in advance and the test taker answers the questions and the interlocutor assesses their speech. Paired interviews are quite the same, but with pairs of students interviewing each other and the interlocutor not talking (Luoma 2004, Brooks 2009). Paired interviews give a broader picture of the test takers' language skills, because there is usually more output, and the language use is more natural and similar to everyday communication (Brooks 2009).

Other task types that can be used both in individual or paired speaking tests are *role-play*, *describing or comparing pictures*, *talking about a pre-announced topic*, and *narrating from a picture series* (Luoma 2004, 36). In role-play tasks, the test takers are given instructions that they need to follow and act in a way that is appropriate for the role (Underhill 1987, 51-52). According to Underhill, role-play tasks can be demanding because they need imagination from the students, but on the other hand, they are usually fun and engaging. Describing and comparing pictures or a picture series include one or more pictures that the test takers compare or describe to the interlocutor or a pair. Their speech is based on only what is in the pictures, but it still leaves room for own interpretations. A good picture can also elicit more speech and boost the speaker's confidence if it is engaging (Underhill 1987, 66-67).

One task type is that the test takers are asked to talk about a pre-announced topic for a certain amount of time, and they are given some time to prepare for their test (Luoma 2004, Underhill 1987). This can be done individually or in pairs, and the interlocutor assesses what the test takers have to say about the topic. These kinds of tasks can also be done as presentations that are assessed. Presentations can be held in front of a class, individually, in pairs or in small groups. Presentations are said to be good ways of assessing speaking, as the task type is authentic, and the speakers have had time to prepare their presentation (Underhill 1987). Oral presentations are often used in assessing speaking in Finnish upper secondary schools (Kemiläinen 2018).

There are also some problem-solving tasks that are conducted in paired format. These tasks can include e.g. drawing a graph or a route on a map based on given information, giving parts of a story to pairs and constructing a whole story together or making a decision (Luoma 2004, 37). According to Luoma (2004) and Brooks (2009), these task types are not interviews and

they give an opportunity to interact in a freer way than in an interview, and thus the test takers' interaction is also more natural.

2.4 The Finnish National Core Curriculum

The Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE) introduced the new National Core Curriculum (NCC) for comprehensive schools in 2014. It includes the learning goals and topics of each subject for each grade in comprehensive school. Grades 1-6 are elementary school, and as my study focuses on lower secondary school, I will briefly discuss the goals of English teaching for grades 7-9 here. The NCC includes goals for transversal competence that aim for versatile skills that are needed in life and taught during the whole comprehensive school in all subjects. I will mention the most important transversal competence goals that are stated in the NCC.

The aim for transversal competence that is the closest to English teaching and CLT is goal number 2 *Cultural competence, interaction and self-expression*. Pupils should be taught about different cultures and their own cultural heritage and how to appreciate multiculturalism in everyday life. This goal also includes the teaching of human rights. Interaction and self-expression are embedded in this goal, and throughout comprehensive school, pupils are encouraged to express themselves and interact in different situations (FNBE 2016). These skills are practised in most of the subjects, but as they are very close to the targets of communicative language teaching, this goal is relevant for my thesis.

It is stated in the NCC in the goals for foreign language teaching that as the pupils learn grammar and vocabulary, they are also taught interaction skills at the same time. Foreign language teaching gives the opportunity to enhance the pupils' plurilingualism and deepen their knowledge of multiculturalism and cultures in the world (FNBE 2016). The pupils should also be encouraged to communicate with people from different parts of the world and to communicate in foreign languages on their own level. One essential element in the goals for foreign language teaching is to strengthen the pupils' confidence in using foreign languages (FNBE 2016).

The targets of English teaching in grades 7-9 are encouraging the pupils to use English as the language of communication in different situations and using English for information

searching (FNBE 2016). There are three key content areas in English teaching for grades 7-9 and they are: C1 *Growing into cultural diversity and language awareness*, C2 *Language learning skills* and C3 *Evolving language proficiency, interaction skills, text interpretation skills, text production skills*. C1 includes the teaching of the history of English and its development to its current position as a lingua franca. The pupils also familiarise themselves with the cultures of English-speaking countries and get to know some varieties of English. C2 focuses on the development of the pupils' language learning skills and the target is to use the materials in different ways, learning about the ways in which languages are learned, searching for information in English and practising source criticism. C3 is about practising the interaction skills that are needed in school and working life and in many different situations via different media. This content area also focuses on different text types and deepening the pupils' reading comprehension skills. The target is also to practise producing different text types (FNBE 2016).

2.5 Previous studies

There have been quite many Master's theses on communicative language teaching and teaching of spoken English. Ville Turunen (2018) studied communicative tasks in upper secondary school English books and found that there are many communicative exercises but that there could be more. He found that most of the communicative exercises in the books relate to opinion-sharing, role-play and info-gathering and sharing. Some of the task types are the same as the task types in the *On the Go* oral exams.

Tiina Puska (2018) interviewed experienced and less experienced English teachers about their opinions of communicative language teaching. The main point of her study is that teachers use methods of communicative language teaching quite a lot, and some teachers use more authentic materials than the course books. She found out that less experienced teachers use more digital technology, e.g. tablets and applications during classes. An important finding is that all the four teachers she interviewed use English as the main language of instruction.

Laura Korpela (2010) studied students' opinions about speaking English and why they might be afraid to speak. Her results showed that the fear of errors and high standards that they set for themselves are the biggest reasons for language anxiety. Language anxiety may also

affect the student's performance in a speaking test or when giving presentation. Being afraid of speaking may also affect a student's grade in a speaking test.

There have been some studies on testing spoken English too. Marja-Liisa Huuskonen and Mirva Kähkönen (2006) studied how spoken English is taught, tested and assessed in Finnish upper secondary schools. Eliisa Kemiläinen (2018) also studied how spoken English is tested and assessed in upper secondary schools before there is a spoken exam in the matriculation exams of English. Huuskonen and Kähkönen (2006) found that the majority of English teachers in Finland think that it is very important to teach spoken English, and that they use various task types, such as role-play and pair discussions in teaching. They also found that the majority of teachers think that it important to test spoken language skills, and that there should be an oral exam in the matriculation examination.

Kemiläinen (2018) found that currently Finnish upper secondary school teachers assess spoken English quite frequently during classes, but that organising an oral exam is not that common. The most common ways of assessing spoken English were oral presentations or other recordings and pair or group activities during classes. More than 40% of the teachers that answered to the questionnaire in that study used ready-made oral exams, and 25% reported that they design oral exams themselves. These studies give a comparison point to my study, because the methods of assessing spoken English are not that different in lower and upper secondary schools.

Minna Stjernvall (2018) studied the assessment of oral performance in lower secondary schools, with speaker hesitation as her point of view. She asked teachers to think aloud while watching a video recording of a speaking test and found that too many filled pauses and silent pauses during a speaking test affect the assessment of the performance. Short silent pauses do not affect the assessment that much, because short pauses do not seem as hesitant as long pauses. Hesitations affect the assessment, because if a student hesitates, their speech is not that fluent.

Lindsay Brooks (2009) studied the effects of test formats, i.e. paired vs. individual tests. She found that students' performance was better in a paired discussion than in an individual test.

Essi Pohto (2019) studied the differences between face-to-face and computer-based oral tests in upper secondary school and found that there are some minor differences in the students'

performances between these two testing methods. The students felt that their performance was better in a face-to-face test and the results showed that their speaking was more fluent in a face-to-face test. On the other hand, the students used more complex language when they did a computer-based oral exam. The students reported that they preferred the face-to-face test, because speaking was more natural, and it made them less nervous.

3 Data and methods

In this chapter, I introduce my data and how I collected it. I will also introduce my method of data analysis. In 3.1., I introduce the oral exams that are in the teacher's materials in *On the Go* -series for lower secondary school English. In 3.2., I describe the interviews that I have conducted, and in 3.3., I write about the method of analysis that I applied to my data.

3.1 Oral exams in *On the Go* teacher's materials

On the Go is a book series for English teaching in the Finnish lower secondary schools. The series was published in 2016-2018 by the publisher SanomaPro, and the books follow the new National Core Curriculum and its targets. In my thesis, I study the oral exams that are in the teacher's assessment materials. This material was chosen because it is the newest material available, and because SanomaPro is the other of the big teaching material publishers in Finland.

The oral exams are in the teacher's assessment and exam materials that are available online for teachers using *On the Go* books in their school. In *On the Go* 1, the materials for 7th grade, there are in total six oral exams, one for each unit in the book. The exams have two or three exercises. In the materials, there are nine oral exams for both 8th and 9th grade, and all of the exams have two exercises. I analysed the exercises of the oral exams with a qualitative content analysis, and that analysis can be found in chapter 4.

3.2 Interviews

An important part of my data are the interviews that I conducted, because with the interviews I got some very detailed data about teachers' practices with teaching and assessing spoken English. The interviews were conducted as semi-structured focused interviews. A focused interview has a plan and the topics and themes are the same for all informants, but for example the order and formatting of the questions may vary (Ruusuvuori & Tiittula 2009). I conducted my interviews in Finnish, because all informants were native speakers of Finnish, so it was easier to discuss in Finnish. I had an interview guide that consisted of three parts and 15 questions, and the interviews were about 25 to 45 minutes in length. The interview

guide is in English in Appendix 1 (see Appendix 2 for the Finnish version). In section 3.2.1 I describe the interview themes.

During the interview, I also showed the informants a ready-made oral exam from *On the Go* teacher's materials and asked them to tell me how they feel about the exam and the task types and whether they would use them. That exam is in Appendix 3. The interviews were recorded with a tape recorder, transcribed and translated into English. Some quotes from the interviews are used in this thesis to show the teacher's original wordings. The original Finnish quotes are in Appendix 7.

The following symbols are used in the transcription of the interviews:

- Pause (.)
- Longer pause (...)
- Omission [---]
- Laughter ((@))

The focus is on the message of the interviewee, so all false starts, hesitations and filled pauses were not transcribed in a detailed way. Personal information such as names and working places were omitted in order to protect the anonymity of the informants. I also asked the informants to sign a form where they agree that the material can be recorded, transcribed and translated and used as the main data in my thesis. The informants also familiarised themselves with a data protection form that told them about their rights when participating in my study and about the purposes of my data collection and the use of the data and their personal information.

3.2.1 Interview guide

In this section I describe my interview guide that consisted of three different themes and 15 questions. The interview guide was piloted first with an English teacher student and edited based on the pilot interview. The first part covers the teaching of oral proficiency. The second part focuses on testing spoken English and different task types. The third part is about the assessment and grading of oral proficiency. The whole interview guide in English is in Appendix 1 and the interview guide in Finnish is in Appendix 2.

In the first part of the interview I asked the teachers for some background information for example about how long they have taught English and if they teach some other languages as well. I also asked the teachers about the importance of oral proficiency and about their methods of teaching oral proficiency. I then asked them about the teaching materials that they use and how they think that spoken English is represented in the materials.

The second part of the interview focused on testing spoken English and on the tasks that teachers use for assessing speaking. I asked the teachers about the oral exams that they have and if they use any oral exams. I also asked about the task types that they use in assessing oral proficiency and whether the tasks are paired, individual or in groups. During this part of the interview I also showed the informants a ready-made oral exam, and I asked them to express their opinions on the tasks in the oral exam.

Part three of the interview was about the assessment of the oral exams and other oral tasks and about overall oral proficiency. I asked the teachers what kind of grades they give their students in the oral tasks and what kind of grading scales they use. I also asked them about the features of spoken English that they consider important when they assess speaking. At the end, I asked the teachers how they could improve their testing and assessing.

3.2.2 Informants

I had four interviewees in total. I recruited my informants with a snowball method; I contacted some English teachers that I know and asked them if they are interested in participating in my study. I also asked them to contact some other teachers who might also be interested in my topic. I started contacting teachers in April and the interviews were done in May and June in 2019. The criteria for the informants were that they work in the Helsinki metropolitan area, so that it was easy to meet them face to face. It was also important that they work in lower secondary schools, because my study focuses on lower secondary school English. I met the informants in a place that was easily accessible for both parties, e.g. the school or a café.

In this thesis, the teachers that I interviewed are numbered as Teacher 1, Teacher 2, Teacher 3 and Teacher 4. They are also referred to as T1, T2, T3 and T4 for saving space. Some background information about the informants is displayed in table 2.

	Teaching experience in years	Languages they teach
Teacher 1	21	English and French
Teacher 2	8	English and French
Teacher 3	8	English
Teacher 4	11	English and Swedish

Table 2. Information about the informants

As can be seen from the table, all teachers have experience teaching English and they have worked as teachers for several years, so they are quite experienced. All teachers currently teach English in lower secondary schools, some also in upper secondary schools. Those teachers who do not currently teach in upper secondary schools have some previous experience of that too. All teachers are qualified to teach two languages, one even three languages.

3.3 Method of analysis

The analysis method that I used both for the oral exams and interview data was qualitative content analysis. According to Elo and Kyngäs (2008), in qualitative content analysis, data is analysed and then divided into different categories. In my study, tasks in the oral exams were divided into categories based on their task types. The oral exams data was analysed with a deductive method (Elo & Kyngäs 2008), with previously determined categories for the task types. Deductive methods means that the analysis starts with the categories and the data is analysed and divided into the already existing categories. The interview data was analysed with content analysis, but with an inductive method. An inductive method means that there are no previously determined categories and that the researcher makes their own categories based on their analysis of the data. The interview data was first transcribed and analysed and then some categorisation of the results were made. The analysis of the interviews is presented

in the same order as in the interview guide, according to the three parts of the interview; teaching, testing and assessing oral proficiency.

4 Analysis

In this chapter, I present the results of my study, i.e. the analysis of the oral exams and interview data. In 4.1, the oral exams of the *On the Go* teacher's materials are analysed, and the interview data is analysed in 4.2.

4.1 Oral exams in *On the Go* materials

There are in total 25 oral exams in the *On the Go* teacher's materials. There are six exams for seventh grade, nine exams for eighth grade and nine for ninth grade. There is one oral exam corresponding each of the units in the books, and the topics are similar to those of the books.

4.1.1 Task types in the oral exams

There are four different task types in the oral exams: read aloud, role play, explain words and production tasks. These task types were mentioned in the books about testing spoken English by Luoma (2004) and Underhill (1987), and as I noticed that there are only these four task types in the exams I decide that these are the categories that the data will be divided to.

In the materials for seventh grade, there are two or three tasks in the oral exams and in the eighth and ninth grade exams there are always two tasks. It is mentioned in the assessment materials for teachers that they can choose the two suggested tasks or add some tasks as they wish. The two or three tasks in the exams are always of different task types.

Reading a text aloud is usually done alone, but in some tasks that is paired too. Role play tasks are, apart from one exception, paired tasks. Explaining words is in every case a paired task, and the production tasks are usually individual, but they can be paired too. There are some supporting questions or words to help the students produce speech in the production tasks.

4.1.2 Oral exams for 7th grade

The oral exams of the On the Go materials for seventh grade include six exams that have two or three tasks each. The tasks are either individual tasks or paired, and an exam usually has both individual and paired tasks. The tasks were counted and categorised according to the four different task types that are used in the oral exams; reading aloud, role play, explaining words and production tasks. The results are displayed in table 3.

Task type	Number of tasks
Read aloud	5
Role play	5
Explain words	1
Production	5
TOTAL	16 (6 individual and 10 paired tasks)

Table 3. Tasks in 7th grade oral exams

As table 3 shows, there are in total 16 tasks in the oral exams for seventh grade. The tasks are of the four task types, but some task types are clearly favoured in seventh grade materials. There is only one task where the task type is explaining words, but there are 5 of each of the other task types. There are six individual tasks and ten paired tasks.

Read aloud tasks are fairly short, from five to ten lines. These task types can be done individually or in pairs. There are three read aloud tasks that are meant for one student to read and two paired, where the turns vary. The texts are of different text types, there are e.g. fact texts, for example news, opinion texts that relate to youths' lives, letters and dialogues between students. The instructions of the tasks usually tell the student what the text is about, that they have to read it aloud, and that they have to focus on pronunciation. For the first read aloud task, the instruction is as follows: "Ryan writes a letter home from the camp. Read the text aloud. Focus on pronunciation." (translated).

Role play tasks begin with a brief introduction to the topic of the conversation. Two students in the task have roles and they are usually persons with names, such as Josh and Laura, or then just A and B. The students can themselves choose their roles. In the seventh grade materials, role plays are paired and they are in the form of a dialogue. There are different instructions for each line in the dialogue, and the students are given hints about what they are to say in the dialogue. The instructions are in Finnish, but the students have talk in English. The instructions can be quite closed, for example “Tell the waiter that you would like two pizza Margheritas”, or they can be more open like “Act interested and tell something about your own room.” (translated).

There are five production tasks in the seventh grade materials, and the topics in the tasks are close to the students’ everyday life. The topics are e.g. hobbies, free time, home and school. The students are asked to talk about certain topics, but they are given some questions for help, if they run out of things to say. The supporting questions are in Finnish, and there are about 5-10 of them. The supporting questions can be either open such as “What do you usually do with your friends?” or closed such as “Do you like to read or write in your free time?”. Production tasks can be for one student, but some are also paired discussions with supporting questions about the topic. The teacher can also pair students to discuss about a topic that was meant for only one person, and the paired discussions can also work as tasks for one student.

In the materials for seventh grade, there is only one task where the students explain words to each other. The idea of those tasks is that out of a set of given words, a student chooses five words that they explain to their pair without saying the actual word, and the pair guesses which word that is. The only task of this task type for seventh grade includes school-related words.

4.1.3 Oral exams for 8th grade

In the materials for eighth grade, there are in total nine oral exams that each have two tasks. So, in total there are 18 tasks. The frequency of each task type is displayed in table 4.

Task type	Number of tasks
Read aloud	5
Role play	5
Explain words	4
Production	4
TOTAL	18 (9 individual and 9 paired)

Table 4. Tasks in 8th grade oral exams

As table 4 shows, all of the task types have roughly the same number of tasks. The tasks are similar to the tasks in the materials for seventh grade, but to some extent a bit more demanding. Some of the tasks are more open and give more opportunities for the student to decide what to say.

Most of the role play tasks are similar to the seventh grade materials and are quite guided. There is, however, one task which is very open with few instructions (see appendix 4). The roles with some information and a few supporting questions are given, but the conversation is not as controlled as in discussions where there are instructions given for each line. The instructions give information about the situation; the roles are for exchange students from Paris and Saint Petersburg and there is also information about how long they have been in Finland and how long they are staying. The students come up with things to say with the help of supporting questions that are related to their roles, such as “What do you think about Finland?” and no ready answers are given.

The production tasks for eighth grade are also a bit more demanding. Some of the tasks have ready-made supporting questions, but some tasks do not have questions, they only have supporting words and topics that the student is supposed to talk about. In one task, for example, the topic is differences between Finland and Canada, and the instructions tell the students to compare the two countries. The student can use the supporting words as help or

come up with their own examples. The supporting words are e.g. nature, climate, multiculturalism, patriotism etc. The supporting words are in Finnish and they are there to give something to talk about if the students run out of things to say.

4.1.4 Oral exams for 9th grade

There are nine units in the ninth grade materials, so there are nine oral exams as well. Each exam has two different tasks. The frequencies of each task type are displayed in table 5.

Task type	Number of tasks
Read aloud	5
Role play	5
Explain words	5
Production	3
TOTAL	18 (9 individual and 9 paired)

Table 4. Tasks in 9th grade oral exams

As can be seen from table 5, there are three tasks that are production tasks, and every other task type has five tasks. What I noticed when I analysed the tasks, is that there are five exactly similar tasks in the ninth grade materials as in the materials for eighth grade.

The topics in the materials for ninth grade are more demanding than in seventh or eighth grade materials. On the other hand, the topics are close to the students' lives, but some topics concern global issues such as natural disasters, climate change and the future.

There are five role play tasks, of which three have instructions about what to say and how to react, similarly to most of the role play tasks in seventh and eighth grade. One of the five role play tasks is not a paired discussion but is for only one student. That task can be seen in appendix 5. The task looks like a production task for one student, but is actually a role play task, because the student is asked to imagine that they are an astronaut and talk about the topics from that point of view. One of the role play tasks does not have instructions about what to say, because it is a scripted dialogue with ready-made lines. The lines are in Finnish

and the students have to translate the lines first, before the conversation. This task was considered a role-play task, because there are two roles in the discussion.

In the oral exams for ninth grade, the read aloud texts are all quite short, about five lines in length. The length of the texts is about the same or even shorter than in the seventh and eighth grade materials. What has changed is the production tasks. There are fewer production tasks in the ninth grade materials than in seventh and eighth grade materials, and the production tasks do not have any supporting questions, only some supporting words.

The number of word explanation tasks grew remarkably between the materials for seventh and eighth grade, and in seventh grade materials there was only one word explanation task and four in the eighth grade materials. In the ninth grade materials there are five word explanation tasks, so it can be said that the amount of word explanation tasks has risen.

4.1.5 Assessing the oral exams

There is a suggested grading scale for the oral exams made by the textbook authors. It is an analytic grading scale that assesses different features of language separately and gives a different assessment for all features. Verbal assessment is used in the grading scale. The grading scale (translated into English) can be seen in table 6. The original Finnish version is in appendix 6.

	Adequate	Satisfactory	Good	Very good
Getting the message across				
Pronunciation				
Vocabulary				
Grammar				

Table 5. Grading scale translated into English

As table 6 shows, the features of language that are assessed in the grading scale are: getting the message across, pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. The features of language are assessed with the different task types, and not every feature is assessed in every task type. For

example, the teacher cannot assess the student's range of vocabulary or grammar in reading aloud tasks. After filling this analytic assessment grid, an overall grade can be given by the teacher based on the performance in each part of the test. This grading scale is only a suggestion by the textbook authors that the teachers may choose to use or they can use their own grading scale, or choose not to assess formally at all.

4.2 Interviews

In this section, I describe the results from the interviews with my four informants. the section is divided into three subsections, based on the themes of the interviews. In 4.2.1., teaching of oral proficiency is discussed. The teachers' methods of testing oral proficiency are introduced in section 4.2.2. The methods of assessing oral proficiency are discussed in 4.2.3. The topics are analysed with the help of quotes from the interviews. The original Finnish quotes are in appendix 7, and the translated versions are as quotes here. The examples are numbered and T1, T2, T3 and T4 are used to refer to the teachers that the quotes are from.

4.2.1 Teaching oral proficiency

In this section, I introduce the teachers' notions about teaching of oral proficiency. I began the interview with asking them about the importance of teaching and having oral proficiency in English and they all answered that it is a very important skill to teach and that it is needed in life. Then I asked them how they teach spoken English and asked them how they teach oral proficiency and how it is represented during their English lessons. The four teachers all have their own methods of teaching English and speaking in English, but they are to some extent quite similar. The teachers have different aspects of language that they think are important when learning a foreign language. Examples 1-4 indicate the teachers' thoughts about the most important things in teaching and learning spoken English.

- (1) T1: What has been a big deal for students is that they learn to speak and have the courage to speak. That is really challenging for some. But when they overcome the fear it is a big thing.
- (2) T2: For me the oral interaction is there all the time. And when it comes to interactional situations (...) and what is more than just verbal interaction. Because it's important to teach what to do when someone else is speaking. In

comprehensive school it's important to look in the eyes and listen and not do anything else at the same time. And conversation cultures in different countries, commenting, active listening, using words and facial expressions (.) so that you can support other's (...) speech and show that you are interested.

(3) T3: For me, the first thing [in teaching oral proficiency] is (...) kind of (...) bringing back the importance of pronunciation.

(4) T4: I think that what's important in speaking is a certain kind of self-confidence. It's important to be confident when speaking foreign languages.

Teachers 1 and 4 both indicate that for them it is important that the students have courage to speak English, and that is what they practice during lessons. For teacher 2, an important aspect in teaching oral proficiency is also teaching non-verbal interaction and how to be polite when talking with other people. Teacher 3 thinks that teaching pronunciation is important in teaching spoken English. According to the informants, also communication and some norms of politeness and the speaking culture of different countries are discussed during English lessons.

I asked the four teachers about how they teach oral proficiency and about the exercises and tasks that they use. Examples 5-8 are about the teachers' practices with oral proficiency during normal English lessons and what kind of exercises they prefer.

(5) T1: We do quite a lot of paired exercises, or the students do and then I go around the classroom and I listen to them. Now with ninth graders we are practising argumentation skills. We watch a Jane Austen movie and practise opinion-expressing based on the movie and that is more difficult. But we don't do any debates, there are too many weak students.

(6) T2: For example I give the students some vocabulary in English and French and the phrases help them in the conversations. We do such exercises that a student talks about topic x and I have made a word list to help with what to say in the middle of the conversation. And I think that it is practising interaction. One simple thing that I do is that I change the partners or seating orders how they are placed in the classroom and are they in pairs or in groups.

- (7) T3: I think that the students need to receive feedback on their pronunciations but as in pronunciation and all oral production there should be exercises that focus on accuracy but also those that focus on fluency.
- (8) T4: Outside the teaching materials I like [paired or grouped] exercises that have questions related to a specific topic, because they are easy to find online. When they are relatively easy and for real are related to our topic. I have noticed that students like to (...) it easily turns into the students talking to one another and they can really express their opinions.

As examples 5-8 show, almost all teachers use paired discussions as a part of their lessons. Teacher 3 responded that for him it is important to teach the correct pronunciation and that exercises that focus on accuracy rather than fluency are important. Of course, fluency is an important aspect as well, but for him accuracy and pronunciation are key skills. Other teachers agreed that fluency is important. Two teachers said that it is important that the students have some supporting questions or vocabulary to help them, because keeping the conversation going is easier that way, and they help students in coming up with things to say and expressing their opinions. Some exercises that were mentioned in the interviews by the teachers were word explanation exercises, drama-based exercises, problem solving, interviews and reading texts aloud.

I asked the teachers about the teaching materials that are in use in their schools. Teacher 1 and teacher 4 answered that *Spotlight* by SanomaPro is used in their schools and teachers 2 and 3 use the newer *On the Go* series in their schools. I asked about the oral exercises in the books and whether they use them and think that they are useful, and the answers varied. Here are some examples about what the teacher think about oral exercises in the books.

- (9) T2: Well, I plan quite a lot of oral exercises on my own @ But I'm very happy with the On the Go books, because there are a lot of exercises for groups. Such nice exercises that the students go around the classroom and ask small questions and they have to talk and deal with the situation.
- (10) T3: They offer like (...) nice "snacks" now and then [---] It's theoretical but quite far away from authentic situations. But if you as a teacher think that it is enough to use the oral exercises in the books, I have to disagree.

- (11) T4: I hate those oral exercises where the students have to talk about the text in the book. I never use them. But I wish there were more of those guided speaking exercises where there is a vocabulary helping the students.

As the previous examples show, the teachers have quite varying opinions about the oral exercises in the books. Teacher 3 said that he does not think that the oral exercises in the books are very useful, whereas other teachers think that the paired exercises or exercises for groups are nice and they use them. Teachers 2 and 4 like those exercises where there is a set of questions for the students and they discuss the topics in pairs. They said that those exercises are good, because they provide the students some of the needed vocabulary. Also teacher 1 said that she uses a lot paired exercises from the books. Teachers 2 and 4 said that they like to use the written exercises in the books and make them into oral exercises. They said that almost every exercise can be turned into an oral exercise and they do that a lot. For example, Teacher 2 mentioned that she sometimes pairs the student to write a story together and while they plan the story they have to communicate with spoken English.

Three of the four informants mentioned drama as a method of teaching spoken English. Teachers 1, 2 and 4 mentioned that they do small plays about different situations, and sometimes they even record those on video. Examples 8 and 9 include some comments about using drama in language classes.

- (12) T1: [Students] use a lot of not only spoken English but also body language and we practise different speech registers. (...) but we do that with drama and it's not tested.

- (13) T2: In situation based language use we can take in pictures and drama for example there is a situation that needs to be resolved (...) and we can make small plays out of those.

According to T1, T2 and T4, drama exercises help in building the confidence to speak, are engaging and help practising the correct ways of speaking in different situations, for example in job interviews, restaurants or at a doctor's practice. Drama exercises also help in practising for situations that the student can face in real life, so the simulations are useful in practising speaking for future purposes.

4.2.2 Testing oral proficiency

After asking the teachers about how they teach oral proficiency, we moved to talking about testing oral proficiency. I showed the teachers one oral exam from *On the Go 1* materials (see appendix 3). The oral exam for seventh grade has three different tasks; read aloud, role play and a production task. I asked the teachers what they think about the oral exam and whether they would use it as it is, or if they would use the task types in assessing oral proficiency. Examples 14-? indicate the teachers' opinions about the oral exam that I showed them.

- (14) T1: I used these kind of exams in the late 90s and the early 2000s. We recorded the exams for legal protection and to record the audio so we recorded with a camera. But it was so distressing to students and I thought that it just didn't work at all. I used these kind of exams for 5-6 years that the students first read a text and then told about a topic. I used these in Frech, and language skills were a lot better than now. And then there were also paired discussions. But they were so distressing to students that I stopped doing them.

Teacher 1 has used a similar oral exam previously, but felt that it was not the best way of testing oral proficiency, because the student were anxious about the exam.

- (15) T2: Reading aloud is good, we do that during lessons too. [---] I like this a lot that the student can freely produce text and there are examples that they can tell about. But I have students that need very detailed instructions so I would have the supporting questions numbered. Or there could be ten topics and the student chooses five, so that the students know when the task is over.

Teacher 2 does not use these kind of oral exams, but she uses some of the task types during her lessons. She uses reading aloud tasks in her lessons, and she also uses paired discussions and role play tasks during lessons. Teacher 2 gave some ideas how the tasks could be improved, for example making the instructions clearer for the students. She also said that a task where one or two students look at a picture and tell what is going on in the picture would be a good task for an oral exam or during lessons.

Teacher 3 uses *On the Go* materials, and also uses the ready-made oral exams that they provide. So, teacher 3 uses the exact same tasks that I have analysed for this study. Example 16 shows teacher 3's opinions about the oral exam tasks.

- (16) The tasks work in test situations that are quite formal and short so students quickly get what they are supposed to do. The language use is not authentic however, but they do what they are asked to do and the conversation isn't very lively.

Teacher 3 thinks that the tasks are good in their purpose, but that usually the conversations that students perform in the oral exams are not authentic and not very lively. He said that he uses word explanation tasks and reading aloud tasks the most, but that after those more formal tasks, he provides the students with a freer task, for example a drama play where the students perform a situation.

Teacher 4 said that reading aloud tasks are good, but she had suggestions of how to improve the other tasks. Example 17 is about her opinions about the role play task.

- (17) For some kids these are really hard that there is "Kerro että on hauska tavata hänet. Onnittele häntä." Because then they just stare at the Finnish text and say "it's nice to meet her". If English is difficult, then the instructions are very difficult for those students, so I would change it (...) It could even be a direct translation or a part could be translation task and the rest could be like three dots and the student continues from there.

Teacher 4 thinks that the instructions are a bit unclear in the tasks, and that the instructions are almost like translation tasks but not exactly. She thinks that the role play tasks could even be tasks where the student translate a text from Finnish into English, but that there are some parts where the student gets to decide what to say.

The third tasks, production task received criticism from teachers 2 and 4 about its instructions. There are some supporting questions that the students use as a help when they tell about themselves. The questions are for example "How old are you?", "Do you have any pets?" or "What do you do in your free time?" The teachers said that they like the idea of this task, that the student tells about him/herself, but they also said that the supporting questions are not very good, because they are quite closed. Closed questions such as "How old are you?" or "Do you have any pets?" do not make the students produce long answers. To those questions students can answer even with one word, which the teachers said is a problem with these tasks.

When I asked the teachers about their methods of testing oral proficiency, the answers varied a lot. Every teacher has different practices of testing spoken English.

As example 18 shows, teacher 1 uses presentations as her main method of assessing oral proficiency.

- (18) T1: The paired exams just didn't work so now we have presentations instead. They are like mini-lessons about a topic that the students have chosen and talk about the topic in English.

As mentioned previously, teacher 1 has used paired oral exams before, but felt that they did not work and the students were anxious about them, so now she assesses oral proficiency with presentations. She said that for ninth-graders she also has individual interviews and they have also been successful. I asked the teachers about the feedback that they have received from their students, and example 19 indicates some students' opinions about oral presentations.

- (19) T1: One student told me that the presentation was a really big thing for her and that she went in front of the classroom and overcame her fear. And quite often students give such feedback that it's good that in a safe environment they can speak in the target language.

What came up in the interview with teacher 1 was that students are often nervous about presentations, but when they start doing them as early as in seventh grade, they very quickly get used to it. Teacher 1 also thinks that the presentations are good practice for the future, when the students are required to give presentations.

Teacher 2 said that she does not have any oral exams, like the ready-made oral exam or interviews, but she assesses oral proficiency during every lesson. She has a lot of oral exercises during classes, and the student give speeches, read aloud, do drama and interview each other. Example 20 indicates teacher 2's ideas about not having any oral exams.

- (20) T2: For me it's more like it's always there. We have something oral during every lesson. For example we do a lot of oral exercises and speeches or student tell about themselves in English.

The idea is that no oral exams are needed because there are oral exercises in every class and other tasks that are assessed.

Teacher 3 uses ready-made oral exams, but says that organising them is not that simple, but rather problematic. Example 21 indicates some of the problems that can arise when organising an oral exam.

- (21) T3: There's always the question about what the kids in the class do. I would like to organise these kind of exams, but it really is a challenge.

Teacher 3 prefers oral exams in a paired format or sometimes even in small groups. He says that the biggest challenge when organising an oral exam is that they need a space for the teacher and the test-takers while the others are in a classroom unattended. A problem is that the teacher cannot supervise the students who are not taking the test. Another problem is that they need to find a place for the test, so that there is no extra noise or any other distractions. Teacher 3 also said that he would prefer paired or even individual oral exams, but due to the lack of time the exams need to be in groups of three or four students.

Teacher 4 prefers individual interviews with students as a method of assessing their oral proficiency. Example 22 gives an idea of teacher 4's interviews, which she uses for assessing spoken English.

- (22) [I have] interviews that the students get to prepare for. They know what I am going to ask but they are not allowed to use any help during the interview. [---]
Students have liked the interviews a lot. For some students it has been the best thing in the whole school year.

Teacher 4 said that students have really liked the individual interviews. Not every student likes the interview, but quite many. Teacher 4 has noted the same problem with these kind of individual exams as teacher 3, i.e. that the other students are left unattended in the classroom and the teacher cannot be sure what is happening there.

Teacher 4 also uses other types of tasks to assess oral proficiency that are not oral exams. She for example assesses pronunciation by making the students read a text and listening to a recording of those readings. She then marks the parts that are unclear so that the students get feedback of their pronunciation. She also uses drama as a teaching method and the students do video recordings of different situations that are also assessed. She also uses presentations for assessing speaking.

Teachers 1, 3 and 4 use interviews and oral exams for assessment, and I asked if they think that being alone with the teacher makes the students more nervous. They agreed that for some it is really exciting, but that giving a presentation is exciting too. But, as mentioned previously, for some teachers the main goal in teaching oral proficiency is that the students have the courage to speak a foreign language.

4.2.3 Assessing oral proficiency

The third part of the interviews focused on assessing oral proficiency. As each teacher has their own ways of testing speaking, they also have their own methods of assessing spoken English. The teachers also have differing ways of assessment for different task types.

Teacher 1 uses different types of assessment for the presentations and interviews. Example 23 illustrates her way of assessing the presentations.

- (23) T1: I give a normal grade I mean a numerical grade for the presentation. And I give numerical grades for other projects too. But in the eighth grade when they give a presentation in groups, I give only “half of a grade”. [---] We have a feedback session in Finnish. Always, because otherwise the students can’t keep up.

In Finnish schools, the numerical grading is from 4-10, as mentioned in chapter 2.2.4. Teacher 1 uses numerical grading for assessing the students’ presentations. She said that 10, the highest grade, is for excellent presentations where both the content and speaking are very good, and a student gets the grade 6 if they have done the presentation, have the courage to go in front of the class and give the presentation. After the presentations, they have a feedback session with all the students in the class so that fellow students can give feedback in Finnish and that works as a peer assessment at the same time.

For the interviews, teacher 1 uses a different, verbal assessment, as indicated in example 24.

- (24) T1: I do the assessment with a scale of four levels. There are levels from survival level to very good (.) I assess pronunciation and how the message gets across (...) and vocabulary and grammar as well. I also concentrate on if I ask them “how are you?” do they remember to ask “how about you?”

Teacher 1 assesses the interview with a verbal assessment scale that has grades from “survival” to “very good”. She concentrates mainly on fluent pronunciation and how well the message gets across, but also range of vocabulary and grammar have an effect on the overall grade.

Teacher 2, who does not use any oral exams, has multiple other oral tasks that she assesses with continuous assessment during lessons. She also uses a lot of self- and peer-assessment when assessing speaking, as example 25 indicates.

- (25) T2: The grading system needs to be planned carefully. Is it from 4 to 10 or from one to five or one to three stars. Can it be something else than putting the students in rank order. Assessment could be based on the student’s strengths. [---] My point is that we have used a lot of self- and peer-assessment. [---] Assessment can be problematic because sometimes I get stuck on a wrong detail. So, it’s good to have more opinions.

Teacher 2 thinks that assessment based only on the teacher’s opinions can be problematic, because sometimes teachers are very critical of their students. She thinks that students give good feedback to each other and that they can also assess their speech themselves. Teacher 2 tries not to use numerical grading when assessing speaking, but prefers a verbal grading system. For example, when her students did a task of giving a speech, fellow students graded the speeches by showing different pictures of butterflies. The purpose of her assessment is to bring out the strengths of each student and also mentioning some targets of improvement. In her assessment sheet, there were three features that the students commented on. First, the students commented on the contents of the peer’s speech. Second, they commented on the performance and how well the message gets across. The third point was the authenticity of the speech and how well the students express their own opinions. Teacher 2 said that authenticity is an important aspect when assessing speeches and essays, because plagiarism is a serious thing nowadays, even in comprehensive school.

As teacher 1, also teacher 2 thinks that the most important aspect when assessing speaking is to assess how well the students can convey the message and express their opinions. Example 26 shows teacher 2’s opinions about what’s important in assessing.

- (26) T2: Communicativeness is the most important factor and accuracy is thought about later.

Teacher 2 thinks that for example accents and pronunciation are not the most important things in speaking a foreign language, but rather the ability to communicate with other people and getting their message conveyed.

Teacher 3 uses the oral exams in *On the Go* teacher's materials and uses a similar kind of grading scale as suggested by the publisher, but he does the assessment in English. Example 27 is about a grading scale that he has designed himself.

- (27) T3: In my grading scale there are the levels brilliant, very good, good, satisfactory and bad, which I never have to use. I try to make sure that I give a lot of supportive feedback. I try to get rid of the 4-10 assessment, so I give verbal feedback. I concentrate on communicativeness and pronunciation, it depends whether it's seventh or ninth grade. And then the contents, I mean range of vocabulary and then accuracy i.e. grammar in sentences. And when I assess pronunciation I focus on overall fluency and for example word stress. Then I build an overall picture and give written feedback.

Teacher 3 has an analytic assessment scale that is similar to the publisher's Finnish grading scale. The features of language that are assessed are the same, because communicativeness, pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar are assessed in both of the scales. Teacher 3's scale has more grades than the textbook authors', because there is one grade superior to "very good", namely "brilliant". Teacher 3 said that assessing can sometimes be difficult, while he understands everything that the Finnish kids say in English, and the message gets across in all cases. In terms of accuracy the sentences are not always correct. He concentrates on the fluency of pronunciation and communication.

Teacher 3 pointed to the problem that many students are very fluent or even native speakers of English and they can express their opinions in every situation orally, but that those students do not necessarily cope with written English. In Finland, even the native speakers of English attend EFL classes, because it is part of the comprehensive school. T3 said that assessing the courses and end-of-year assessment is mostly based on written exams rather than on oral exams, and the students who speak excellent English do not always get high grades on the written exams and thus their end-of-year or final grade is not very good. There is also a controversy in that the students who get the highest grades cannot always convey messages orally very well.

Teacher 4 uses different assessment methods for different task types. She prefers verbal assessment, and example 28 shows her method of assessing the interviews with students.

- (28) T4: I have three features that I assess. There's fluency (...) so how natural the speaking is and then (...) communicativeness and also pronunciation. Of these three features I give a verbal grade like "very good" and an overall grade if the students want to. I have also used the levels of the European framework so that I have given out the texts that describe their skills. Because the texts are easily understandable and it's nice to see which level they are on. Well they don't understand the A and B levels but the texts tell what they can do with their skills.

As teachers 1 and 3, also teacher 4 uses verbal assessment and has her own grading scale that assesses the different aspects of spoken language. One of the aspects is fluency, and by that teacher 4 means the overall fluency of speaking and how comprehensible the student's speaking is. Teacher 4 also uses CEFR scales as a help in assessment, but does not use the A, B and C levels, but uses the texts that describe the different levels and the skills that come with a certain level. T4 said that she does not record the interviews, but that recordings would help with assessing the interviews a lot, because without the recordings, assessment is quite intuitive and she cannot go back and listen to the interviews and reflect on the students' mistakes. As teacher 3, also teacher 4 thinks that organising oral exams and interviews is a bit problematic, because she cannot be sure about what is happening in the classroom where the other students are unattended.

For presentations, teacher 4 uses peer-assessment, as example 29 indicates.

- (29) T4: I use peer-assessment for assessing presentations. An of course I assess the presentations too, but I have noticed that students can give very good feedback and usually I agree with the peer feedback. I pick some comments from the peer feedback and combine them with my own comments and then I write the feedback in the student's Wilma account.

Teacher 4 asks the students to give comments about each other's presentations and assesses the presentations herself too. She gives the written feedback via Wilma, a student register system, so that the students and their parents can read the feedback online.

When assessing speaking, teacher 4 thinks that overall fluency and communicativeness are the most important factors, as example 30 shows.

- (30) T4: I think that if a student is really competent then the overall fluency must be (...) so that it's very easily comprehensible and I don't have to go back and think about what the student said. But all in all, I emphasize communicativeness the most. If a student speaks so that they can be understood, that'll get them far.

As it is important for the students to know about the tasks and assessment methods before the exams and assessment, I asked the teachers how they tell their students about assessment of oral proficiency. They all answered that they do tell the assessment criteria for the students before the interviews, oral exams and presentations. If there is a peer-assessment, the assessment criteria for the peers are told beforehand. The teachers tell about the assessment criteria during their lessons, but teacher 4 uses an online-platform for informing the students about upcoming tasks and exams and the assessment criteria that she uses for evaluating the tasks.

- (31) T4: I have a Google classroom for every group and I have written the instructions there (.) for example instructions for recordings and there the students find the instructions and the assessment criteria. And the same thing with the interviews, because they can prepare for the interview, so that they know what they have to do.

One form of assessment that all the teachers mentioned is continuous assessment. This happens when the teachers set up a task in the classroom during a regular lesson, and they go around the classroom and listen to the students speaking. Example 32 reflects teacher 3's thoughts about assessing speaking and giving feedback during lessons.

- (32) T3: Assessment is more difficult during lessons, because not all students can get their voice heard. I try to do it, but it's not very systematic. I do make some notes. For example if I hear that some students have difficulties in pronouncing some words I note that and try to find time to go through those words. But I often do so that the students do an oral task and I go around the classroom and listen. But I don't correct their speech, I just make some notes. And then I try to find time to give feedback after the tasks.

As the quote from the interview with teacher 3 indicates, the ongoing assessment is not so systematic as assessing oral exams or presentations. Teachers 1 and 4 mentioned this too. As mentioned earlier, teacher 2, who does not have any oral exams uses more of this kind of ongoing assessment during every lesson.

I asked the teachers about challenges that can occur in testing and assessing oral proficiency. The fact that oral exams can be difficult to organise was mentioned earlier, but there are some other challenges as well. One challenge mentioned by teacher 2 is that the students are not always sure about what is important in speaking, and that they think that they have to pronounce perfectly. Example 33 shows teacher 2's opinions about this.

- (33) T2: I think that what's challenging is how to make the students understand what's it all about. I have students who pronounce very well but the communication is awkward and students who speak with their Finnish accent but are very fluent and listen, ask for speaking turns and take others into account.

Teacher 2 said that some students think that correct pronunciation is important, when it actually isn't. She said that it's important to make sure that the students understand that the most important thing in speaking is the communication, which might sometimes be difficult for the students to understand. Also teacher 3 said that making sure what the assessment criteria are is difficult.

Teacher 4 has a different challenge when assessing oral proficiency, namely that some students do not properly understand that all the recordings and interviews are assessed, because they are not written tests, and they do not take the tasks seriously. Example 34 is about teacher 4's opinion about this.

- (34) T4: When the students record a video or do audio recordings I should (...) stress that this task can actually affect your grade. Or somehow threaten that this task is assessed. No matter how many times I say that this is assessed they still think that it's only a recording.

I ended the interviews with asking the teachers how they could develop their testing and assessing of spoken English and the answers were different.

Here is teacher 1's comment about how she wants to develop testing and assessing spoken English.

- (35) T1: I'd like to develop assessing so that there really are proper criteria for transversal competences and I have even enrolled in a test group. And skill levels are also important and that there's something concrete that the student needs to be able to do. I want the students to improve so that they have a solid base in a language and it's not just chitchat but that they can manage after comprehensive school. Because if they don't have solid language skills, it's going to be difficult.

Teacher 1 is interested in applying the national curriculum's transversal competences (see chapter 2.4) into language teaching and assessing. She also thinks that there should be clear skill levels in assessing languages, because it makes the assessment clearer to the teacher but also to the students. Considering language teaching, teacher 1 thinks that it is important that the students have a solid base in language skills so that they can manage in secondary studies, and that is her main goal in teaching.

Example 36 is about teacher 2's opinions on developing teaching and testing oral skills.

- (36) T2: If we had more oral exams I think that it would motivate the students to do the oral exercises during lessons, too, because they are important as well. [---] But the students need to have opportunities to improve and they should understand that being able to speak is not enough, they can always improve communication and interaction. And for example different accents and problem solving. Teaching oral skills is more than teaching the vocabulary.

Teacher 2 thinks that if they had oral exams, the exercises during lessons would be more motivating, because they are practice for the exams. Teachers 1 and 2 have quite similar thought about the transversal competences and communication skills. Teacher 2 thinks that it's very important that the students know that communication and interaction are important in speaking a foreign language and not just being able to produce speech. It is also important that the students have opportunities for developing their skills and receiving supportive feedback. She also thinks that setting clear criteria for assessment is important and the criteria could be developed even further.

Teacher 3 said that he would like to make assessment more systematic and plan it more precisely.

- (37) T3: I would like my assessment methods to be more systematic and they should be clearer. I could make it clearer to the students what I expect from them and what I don't expect. It could be less spontaneous. The assessment and oral exams should be more systematic, and the oral exams should be easier to organise.

Teacher 3 said that he needs to plan the oral exams and the assessment of the oral exams and other projects more carefully, and that it is important to have clear assessment criteria that also the students know about.

Teacher 4 has similar ideas with teacher 3. She said that she is quite spontaneous and comes up with different tasks quite quickly, but it is sometimes surprising to the students. Example 38 is about teacher 4's opinions about how she could develop her testing and assessing spoken English.

- (38) T4: Well, I'm quite impulsive and I might come with tasks I want to try and then I do it and it might come as a surprise to the students (...) So I could be more careful with planning. For example, at the beginning of the year I could plan the whole year's tasks that are assessed. And inform about them on Google classroom so the students know about the tasks they have to do and no surprises appear. And they can prepare themselves for the tasks.

Teacher 4 said that she could develop her planning more and a good way of doing it is planning the whole year's tasks at the same time and write them to each class' page on Google classroom so that the students can familiarise themselves with the tasks before they are even assigned. Also teacher 4 said that she could plan the assessment criteria more carefully so that the assessment is more systematic.

5 Discussion

In this chapter I discuss the results that I of the oral exams analysis and interview analysis and relate the results back to theory.

5.1 Oral exams and task types

The task types in the oral exams were similar to those that were introduced in Luoma's (2004) and Underhill's (1987) studies. The oral exams in *On the go* materials used a lot of role play tasks, and according to Luoma and Underhill those task types are successful in testing oral proficiency. Also tasks where the test-taker talks about a pre-announced topic were popular in the oral exams as production tasks. A task type that was also said to be successful (Underhill 1987) and that appeared often in *On the Go* oral exams is problem-solving. The word explanation tasks that were quite frequent in 8th and 9th grade materials can be counted as problem-solving, because the students need to explain words and solve them together.

The publisher's oral exams used both individual and paired tasks, and the individual tasks were mostly to assess pronunciation. This is good, because according to Brooks (2009), students' performance is usually better in a paired test than in an individual test. Paired tests also save time and are easier to organise, which came up in the interview with teacher 3. Out of my four informants, only teacher 3 uses the ready-made oral exams, and teacher 1 responded that she has used such exams previously but not anymore. The reason the teachers do not use ready-made paired or individual oral exams is that they are not deemed practical and that the teachers have other methods of testing oral proficiency, and they do not think that the publisher's oral exams are very useful. When I asked the teachers to express their opinions about the ready-made oral exams, they said that they do use similar tasks to assess speaking, but that they are not oral exams. They use for example reading aloud for assessing pronunciation and role play tasks. The teachers said that not all tasks are systematically assessed. Because some oral exercises are done only during lessons, the teachers might not always be able to observe every student, and the students might not always take the exercises seriously. Some teachers said that they use for example iPads or mobile phones for recording some performances on video so that they can be watched later.

5.2 Teaching oral proficiency

Communicative language teaching is a trend in foreign language teaching, and it is also a goal in the National Core Curriculum (FNBE 2016). All the four teachers agreed that communication is very important and for three teachers it was the most important goal in language teaching. One of the informants said that he wants to focus on pronunciation as well as on communicativeness.

One task type that the teachers reportedly noticed to work well in communicative language teaching and that the students also like is a task where there are open questions for the students to ask one another and then come up with their own answers. According to two teachers, these exercises are the most useful when some phrases and vocabulary are provided to the students to help them find things to say. These exercises can be considered as interviews, which is a commonly used form of oral testing and teaching communicative competence (Luoma 2004, Banciu & Jireghie 2012). According to Banciu and Jireghie (2012), pair work is often used in teaching communicative competence, because speaking with a partner is efficient training for speaking and practicing communication and interaction with other people. All the four informants said that they use a lot of pair work during lessons, and one teacher informed me that she makes the students change speaking partners or groups for almost every lesson so that they learn to speak with other students than just their best friends.

Another task type that was mentioned in the interviews was word explanation tasks. Word explanations came up frequently in the *On the Go* oral exams, but some of the teachers said that they use such exercises during normal classes. Teacher 4 said that they are good practice for developing communication skills and vocabulary, and they make the student speak in English.

Though this thesis is about testing and assessing oral proficiency, communicative language teaching is an important factor that leads to competence in spoken English. I did not ask the teachers about their views on CLT, but based on the interviews they use methods of communicative language teaching and they aim for fluent communication. What communication means to the teachers is that the students speak relatively fluent English, take other speakers into account, and the most important thing is that the message gets across.

Communication is one of the important aspects in teaching spoken English, but it is not the only thing that is learned during English lessons. The teachers said that non-verbal communication is also important, such as active listening and showing interest towards what other people say. Some of the teachers also mentioned politeness and that learning to talk politely and using some phrases in English is what they also practice. The speech cultures of different countries were also mentioned, as teachers 1 and 2 teach also French, they like to teach the politeness norms of France and English-speaking countries, because there are differences in the politeness norms and between French and English. Teachers 1 and 4 indicated that for them the main goal in teaching spoken English is that the students gain self-confidence and that they have the courage to speak a foreign language.

5.3 The teachers' methods of testing oral proficiency

The four informants all have their different methods in teaching and testing oral proficiency. The teachers can themselves decide what kind of tests they want to use, and it is not obligatory to organise any tests regarding speaking. Three of the four informants organise some sort of speaking tests, but one of the four teachers said that she does not have any oral exams, but rather other tasks that are assessed.

Interviews are a common form of oral exams (Luoma 2004, Underhill 1987), and two of the four informants said that they use interviews in English for assessing spoken English. Teachers 1 and 4 said that they are efficient in assessing oral proficiency and it is easy to give feedback for each student, because the interviews are individual. Interviews are not the only tasks they use for assessing speaking, for example teacher 1 assesses speaking with oral presentations that the students have prepared for the whole class.

Teacher 2 uses many different tasks for assessing speaking, but there are no specific oral exams. The students for example give speeches or presentations in class. There is something oral in every class so that teacher 2 can hear the students speak in every lesson and use continuous assessment. Teacher 2 also uses drama activities quite frequently and sometimes the drama activities are filmed so that the teacher can watch them later or they can be watched in class. During teacher 2's classes there are a lot of paired tasks and interviews in pairs or small groups, but those tasks are not usually assessed.

Teacher 3 uses the same oral exams from *On the Go* materials that I analysed for this thesis and said that they are a good way to test the students' oral abilities. He said that they are easy

to organise, because no equipment are needed and the test do not require a lot of planning. On the other hand, organising the exams is difficult because finding a space for the oral exams is not always easy. Underhill (1987) talked about the difficulty of organising an oral test, because the tasks, timing, place, and pairing up students can take quite a long time.

Teacher 4 also favours individual interviews as a means of testing oral proficiency, and that can be considered as the only oral test that she uses. Other tasks that she assesses are not oral exams but rather tasks that are done during lessons or sometimes at home. These tasks are quite similar to teacher 2's tasks, like drama exercises that are recorded on video. She also uses recordings as a way of assessing pronunciation, which is one of the methods that were mentioned in Underhill's book (1987).

5.4 Assessing oral proficiency

As the teachers' testing methods differ, their assessment methods are also somewhat different, but have very similar features. Teachers 1, 3 and 4 favour so-called analytic assessment (Tuan 2012), where the different features of speech, such as pronunciation, fluency and vocabulary are all assessed separately. The teachers have their own grading scales and they concentrate on different features of speech, but the grading scales are quite similar. They all reported that they use verbal grading with grades such as "very good", "good", "satisfactory" etc. for assessing e.g. pronunciation, communication, grammar and vocabulary and usually they give an overall grade of the fluency of the students' speech. Teacher 3 reported that for him fluent pronunciation is important, but that communication is an important factor in assessment, too. Teachers 1 and 4 concentrate more on communication and conveying the message.

Teacher 2's assessment is more holistic, as she does not give any grades about the features of speech, but concentrates more on the overall performance, such as fluency and how well the message gets across. Teacher 2 also uses self and peer assessment quite frequently, because she wants to make the students think about their own skills and how they have improved their skills. She said that she does not want to rank the students in any way, but rather concentrate on each student's strengths as a language learner.

Teacher 1 uses numerical grading when assessing oral presentations, but also gives some feedback orally. She also uses peer assessment, as they have a feedback session after each

presentation when the peers get to comment on each other's performance. Teacher 4 reported that she uses peer assessment too, usually when assessing presentations.

All of the teachers mentioned continuous assessment as a part of their overall assessment. Going around in the classroom and listening to the students speaking seems to be the most common way of doing continuous assessment regarding speaking. The teachers mentioned that this is not very systematic, however, because they don't have time to listen to every student, and it is not even possible to focus on all students during one lesson. Teacher 3 said that he makes notes while he listens to his students speaking and he tries to find time to go through his notes with the students, so that he can point out some of the most common mistakes that the students make.

As the National Core Curriculum (FNBE 2016) suggests, teachers should use diverse assessment methods such as continuous assessment, self and peer assessment, numerical grading and verbal grading, and the four informants do use many different methods for assessing speaking and giving final grades.

5.5 Limitations of the study

This study focuses on teaching, testing and assessing oral proficiency in Finnish lower secondary schools. The study was conducted with an analysis of the ready-made oral exams of *On the Go* series. I also interviewed four informants. This study concentrates only on oral exams in one English textbook series. Analysing the oral exams of two different series would have given the possibility to compare the oral exams between two different textbook series.

The four informants gave an overview of how they teach, test and assess spoken English. This study describes the four teachers' different methods but does not give a thorough view of how testing and assessment of oral proficiency is performed in Finnish schools. More informants in an interview study would have given more depth and possibility to comparison, but due to the lack of time and access to willing informants, I only interviewed four teachers. A questionnaire study would have given more data and access to more different testing and assessing methods, but then I probably would not have gotten a detailed picture of the informants' views on testing and assessing.

6 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to find out about the methods of assessing spoken English in Finnish lower secondary schools. This study also concentrated on what kind of oral exams do the teaching materials provide.

This study answers to the following research questions:

1. What kind of oral exams are there in *On the Go* teaching materials for lower secondary school English?
2. How is oral proficiency assessed in lower secondary schools?

The oral exams were analysed with an deductive content analysis method, where the task types of the oral exams were divided into categories. The ready-made oral exams by the textbook authors included four different task types: read aloud, role play, explain words and production tasks. The oral exams became more demanding towards the end of ninth grade. In seventh and eighth grade the topics in the oral exams were close to young people's everyday lives, such as hobbies, friends and school, but in ninth grade the topics became more abstract and demanding such as the environment, the future and applying for jobs.

The interview data was analysed with an inductive content analysis method. The data showed that the four informants each have their own methods in assessing and teaching oral proficiency. Three of the four informants reported that they use some kind of oral exams, but one informant said that she rather assesses oral proficiency during English lessons. One teacher said that he uses the teaching material's ready-made oral exams, and two teachers use interviews and other oral presentation when they assess speaking.

The teachers favour their own analytic grading scales when they assess speaking. Only one teacher reported that she uses numerical grading when she assesses oral presentations. The teachers said that analytic assessment gives the students information about their speaking and its different features. The teachers focus for example on overall fluency, communication, grammar and vocabulary.

Three of the four teachers think that communicativeness and overall fluency are the most important thing when assessing lower secondary school English. One teacher reported that he concentrates on pronunciation, because it affects the overall fluency. The teachers agreed that in lower secondary school, it is important to gain self-confidence when speaking foreign languages and having courage to speak foreign languages.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Interview guide in English

Part I Teaching oral proficiency

- 1) How long have you been a teacher? Which languages do you teach?
- 2) How important do you think oral proficiency is? Does it play a big role in your teaching and lessons?
- 3) How do you teach oral proficiency?
- 4) What teaching materials are in use in your school? What do you think about the oral exercises in the teaching materials?

Part II Testing oral proficiency

- 5) How do you test oral proficiency? What kind of oral exams (if any) do you have? What kind of other oral tasks do you assess?
- 6) Do you use the oral exams in the teacher's materials? Why/why not? (At this point I showed the informants the ready-made oral exam)
- 7) What kind of tasks do you use when you assess oral proficiency? E.g. reading a text aloud, interviews, paired tasks.
- 8) What is the format of oral exams? Paired, individual, in groups?

Part III Assessing oral proficiency

- 9) How do you assess oral proficiency? What kind of a grade do you give your students?
- 10) What challenges can there be when assessing oral proficiency?
- 11) What kind of feedback have you received from your students regarding oral exams?
- 12) How do you tell your students about the assessment?
- 13) What is the most important factor when you assess oral proficiency? What do you focus on?
- 14) How important is the assessment of oral proficiency when considering final grading and end of year grading?
- 15) How could you improve testing and assessing oral proficiency?

Appendix 2 Interview guide in Finnish

Osa I

1. Taustatiedot: kuinka kauan olet ollut opettajana, mitä kieliä opetat
2. Kuinka tärkeänä pidät suullisen kielitaidon osaamista? Kuinka suuressa osassa suullinen kielitaito on oppitunneilla? Onko kenties muuttunut uuden opetussuunnitelman myötä?
3. Kuinka opetat suullista kielitaitoa?
4. Mitä opetusmateriaaleja koulussasi käytetään? Kuinka suulliset tehtävät näyttäytyvät opetusmateriaalissa (ovatko mielestäsi hyviä, hyödyllisiä, käytätkö, mitä mieltä olet?)

Osa II

5. Kuinka testaat suullista kielitaitoa? Millaisia suullisia kokeita pidät? (vai pitääkö ollenkaan kokeita? Mitä muita arvioitavia suullisia tehtäviä?) Kuinka usein testaat?
6. Käytätkö opetusmateriaalien suullisia kokeita? --> miksi/miksi et?
Jos käytät, kuinka ne mielestäsi toimivat?
7. Millaisia tehtäviä käytät suullisen kielitaidon arviointiin? Esim.
Lue teksti ääneen, haastattelu, puhu parin kanssa...
8. Mikä on suullisten kokeiden formaatti? (parin kanssa, pienessä ryhmässä, opettajan kanssa kahdestaan?)
9. Millaisia haasteita suullisen kielitaidon arvioinnissa ja kokeissa voi olla?
10. Millaista palautetta olet saanut oppilailta suullisista kokeista? Onko oppilaiden suhtautuminen tai käyttäytyminen vaikuttanut järjestämiseen?

Osa III

11. Kuinka arvioit suullista kielitaitoa? Millainen arvosana kokeesta/tehtävistä tulee?
12. Mikä on tärkeintä suullisen kielitaidon arvioinnissa? Mihin kiinnität huomiota?
13. Miten kerrot oppilaille arvioinnista ja kriteereistä?
14. Kuinka tärkeää suullisen kielitaidon testaaminen ja arviointi on?
15. Kuinka suuri merkitys suullisen kielitaidon osaamisella on kokonaisarvioinnissa?
Onko merkittävä osuus esim. Päättöarvioinnissa tai lukuvuosi-arvioinnissa?
16. Kuinka voisit kehittää suullisen kielitaidon arviointia ja arviointikeinoja?

Appendix 3 Oral exam for seventh grade (*On the Go 1*)

1. Ryan's letter

Ryan kirjoittaa leiriltä kirjeen kotiin. Lue teksti ääneen. Kiinnitä huomiota ääntämiseen.

Dear Mom and Dad,

Greetings from Camp Stargazer! Everything has been great although you couldn't call this a vacation. We need to wake up really early – I get up at 8 every morning to brush my teeth. We eat breakfast at 8.30 in the cafeteria which is on the other side of the camp. After breakfast we usually have some stretching at the beach to warm up for our morning sports. We also get a list of activities and we can sign up for what we want to do. There are so many choices: archery, horseback riding, arts and crafts, swimming... It's hard to decide, but I want to try everything at least once! There's even treetop trekking where we walk on ropes through the tops of trees. But don't worry, it's not very dangerous!

I've also made some new friends, which is nice. They're all in 7th grade so we are the same age.

Got to go now, we're off to do some outdoor cooking!

Love,
Ryan

1. Hello, my name is...

Esittele itsesi ja kerro itsestäsi ja harrastuksistasi. Voit kertoa esimerkiksi joistain seuraavista asioista:

- Minkä ikäinen olet?
- Missä asut?
- Mitä koulua käyt?
- Keitä perheeseesi kuuluu?
- Onko sinulla lemmikkejä?
- Mitä harrastat / mitä tykkäät tehdä vapaa-ajallasi?

*Jos et muista jotain sanaa, yritä selittää asia toisin sanoin.
Saman asian voi ilmaista monella eri tavalla!*

1. Meeting Grandma

Laura on kutsunut ystävänsä Joshin mukaan isoäitinsä 80-vuotisjuhlille. Hän esittelee Joshin isoäidilleen. Päättää parisi kanssa, kumpi on isoäiti ja kumpi on Josh. Käykää allaoleva keskustelu kiinnittäen huomiota kohteliaaseen kieleen.

Laura: Grandma, I'd like you to meet my friend Josh.

Josh: Kerro isoäidille (rouva Adams), että on hauska tavata hänet. Onnittele häntä syntymäpäivän johdosta.

Grandma: Kiitä onnitteiluista. Kerro, että sinustakin on hauska tavata Josh, ja että olet kuullut hänestä paljon. Kysy, mitä Joshille kuuluu.

Josh: Vastaa, että sinulle kuuluu hyvää. Kehu isoäidin juhlia.

Grandma: Kiitä ja kerro, että toivot Joshin nauttivan illasta.

Josh: Vastaa myöntävästi. Kerro isoäidille (rouva Adams), että oli hauska tavata.

Grandma: Vastaa Joshille, että sinustakin oli mukavaa tavata.

Keskustelussa tärkeintä on olla kohtelias ja osoittaa kiinnostuneisuutta keskustelukumppania kohtaan. Jos et muista jotain sanaa, yritä selittää asia toisin sanoin. Saman asian voi ilmaista monella eri tavalla! Muista, että myös ilmeet ja eleet ovat olennainen osa sujuvaa kommunikointia. Tarvittaessa voit myös esittää selventäviä lisäkysymyksiä parillesi.

Appendix 4 Role play task for eighth grade (*On the Go 2*)

How do you like it here?

Sinä ja parisi olette tulleet vaihto-opiskelijoina Suomeen. Toinen on ranskalainen Marie, toinen venäläinen Alexei. Seuraavat taustatiedot auttavat teidät alkuun, keksikää itse lisää keskustelun aikana!

Marie: Kotoisin Pariisista, saapunut Suomeen pari kuukautta sitten. Aikoo opiskella Suomessa ainoastaan syyslukukauden ajan.

Alexei: Kotoisin Pietarista, saapunut Suomeen kaksi viikkoa sitten. Tullut opiskelemaan koko lukuvuodeksi.

Tapaatte toisenne orientaatiopäivänä uudessa koulussanne. Käykää tutustumiskeskustelu ja kyselkää toistenne ensivaikutelmia Suomesta.

Voitte käyttää apuna seuraavaa listaa ja keksiä itse lisää:

- Tervehtikää toisianne ja esitelkää itsenne.
- Mistä olette kotoisin?
- Milloin olette saapuneet Suomeen? Kuinka kauan aiotte olla Suomessa?
- Mitä pidätte Suomesta? Mitä olette ehtineet tehdä? Oletteko esimerkiksi matkustelleet eri kaupungeissa, käyneet saunassa tai maistaneet salmiakkia?
- Onko teillä ollut kulttuurisokkia? Mikä on kummallisimman suomalainen tapa tai asia, jonka olette kohdanneet?

Keskustellessa on tärkeintä osoittaa kiinnostusta keskustelukumppania kohtaan. Jos et muista jotain sanaa, yritä selittää asia toisin sanoin. Saman asian voi ilmaista monella eri tavalla. Muista, että myös ilmeet ja eleet ovat tärkeä osa sujuvaa kommunikointia. Voit myös esittää selventäviä lisäkysymyksiä parillesi.

Appendix 5 Role play task for one student in ninth grade materials (*On the Go 3*)

The final frontier

Kuvittele, että sinut on valittu työskentelemään kansainvälisellä avaruusasemalla ISS:llä. Mitä odotat eniten, mikä jännittää ja mitä sinun tulee ottaa uudessa työssäsi huomioon? Voit kertoa esimerkiksi seuraavista asioista:

- painovoima ja siihen liittyvät haasteet / huvittavat puolet
- päivärytmi
- avaruusaseman äänet
- säännöllinen liikunta
- syöminen ja juominen
- avaruuspuvun pukeminen
- nukkuminen
- peseytyminen ja hygienia
- vaatteet
- kierrättäminen
- koti-ikävä ja yhteydenpito kotiin
- mitä henkilökohtaisia tavaroita pakkaat mukaan.

Jos et muista jotain sanaa, yritä selittää asia toisin sanoin. Saman asian voi ilmaista monella eri tavalla!
--

Appendix 6 Grading scale in Finnish (From *On the Go* teacher's materials)

Suullisten kokeiden arviointi

Oppilas _____

	Välttävä	Tyydyttävä	Hyvä	Kiitettävä
Viestin välittyminen				
Ääntäminen				
Sanasto				
Rakenteet				

Yleisvaikutelma _____

Appendix 7 Finnish quotes from the interviews

- (1) Oppilaille on noussu suurimmaks se et oppii puhumaan ja uskaltaa sanoa. (.) Se on todella haastavaa joillekki. Mut sit ku ne pääsee sen pelon läpi ja näin nii sen on kyl ollu iso juttu.
- (2) Mulle se on jatkuvasti läsnä se vuorovaikutus, suullinen vuorovaikutus ja myös ikäänkun että (.) mitä siihen vuorovaikutustilanteisiin liittyy sellasta (...) mikä on sellasen sanallisen verbaalisen viestinnän ulkopuolella. Koska seki on läsnä ja sitäkin pitää opettaa et mitenku joku puhuu et mitä silloin ite tekee. Et peruskoululaisilla se et kattoo silmiin ja kuuntelee eikä tee mitään muuta samaan aikaan. Ja mikä eri maalaisiin keskustelukulttuureihin liittyy niin kommentointi, aktiivinen kuunteleminen, minkälaisilla sanoilla, eleillä ilmeillä (.) voi ikäänkuin kannatella sen toisen puhujan (...) kertomusta ja osoittaa mielenkiintoa.
- (3) ensimmäinen osa sitä on sit tavallaan sen (...) sen (...) ääntämisen nostaminen takaisin keskiöön.
- (4) mun mielest suulliseen kielitaitoon liittyy aika paljon sellanen itsetunto. Et olis semmonen niinku kielellinen itsetunto niin se olis merkittävää.
- (5) [---] aika paljon paritehtäviä tai oppilaat tekee keskenään ja mä käyn kuuntelemassa. ja niille varataan aikaa. Me ruvetaan ysiluokan kanssa just tekee sen jane austenin elokuvan pohjalta niin argumentointia nii se menee jo vähän vaikeemmaksi. Mut ei me mitään debatteja tehä tuolla. siel on niin paljon heikkoja siellä sit.
- (6) Ja sit annetaan heille jotain tiettyä sanastoo englannissa ja ranskassa et minkälaisin fraasein sit tehään sellasia harjotuksia et joku puhuu aiheesta x ja sitten mul on vaikka sanalista heijastettuna et mitä sinne väliin voi sanoa et mä ajattelen et seki on sellasta vuorovaikutuksen (.) harjottelua mut sellanen yksinkertanen järjestely et mä aktiivisesti vaihdan heille vaikka puhekaveria et kun (.) hyvin opettajajohtosesti sitä et miten he ovat asettuneet sinne luokkaan et onko pareittain tai ryhmittäin tai kenen parina on.
- (7) Ja mä oon ihan eri mieltä et mun mielestä siitä pitää ehdottomasti saada siitä ääntämisestä palautetta mut et niinku ääntämisessä siis puheen tuottamisessa (.) niin siinä niinku kaikessa muussakin on annettava tarkkuusharjoituksia ja sit myös sujuvuusharjoituksia ja molempia riittävässä suhteessa.
- (8) Oppimateriaalin ulkopuolelta mä tykkään paljon ottaa sellasia tehtäviä joissa on vaikka aihepiiriin liityen esimerkiks kysymyksiä ku netistä saa aika paljon niitä. silloin ku ne on

kohtuu helppoja ja sit oikeesti liittyy aiheeseen. ku mä oon huomannu et oppilaat mielellään (...) ku siit tulee helposti semmost jutustelua keskenään et ne voi oikeesti kertoo omia mielipiteitään.

- (9) Joo, no mä kehittelen aika paljon omia suullisia tehtäviä @ mut oon hirveen tyytyväinen noihin on the go kirjoihin et ku siellä on sellasia ryhmälähtösiä tehtäviä. Mut sellasia perus kivoja tehtäviä et vaikka kierrellään luokassa ja kysellään pikku juttuja luokkakavereilta ja pitää sellasella pikkujutustelulla selvitä siitä tilanteesta.
- (10) Ne [kirjat] tarjoa niinku sellasia (..) kivoja pikku välipaloja silloin tällöin [---]Jotain sellasta teoreettista mut aika etäällä sellasesta oikeesta kielenkäyttötilanteesta. mut jos sä ajattelet opettajana et sun suullisen kielitaidon opettaminen on sillä tehty nii siitä mä en oo kyllä samaa mieltä.
- (11) Mä inhoon siis oppimateriaaleista niitä keskustele siitä tekstistä tehtäviä. ne mä skippaan aina mä en ikinä koskaan käytä niitä. ja se mitä mä haluaisin et olis enemmän et olis semmosia selkeesti ohjattuja puhetehtäviä joihin on annettu oikeesti sanastoo avuks koska sehän on se vaikee.
- (12) Ne [oppilaat] käyttää todella paljon ei vaan siis suullista englantia vaan koko kehonkieltä ja eri puherekistereitä me harjotellaan (.) mut draaman kautta ja sitä ei testata.
- (13) Et just tollasessa tilannelähtösessä kielenkäytössä niin voi ottaa kuvaa mukaan ja draaman keinoin et voi olla et pitää vaikka selvittää joku tilanne (...) ja niistä voidaan tehdä vaikka joku pieni näytelmä.
- (14) Mä käytin tällästä xx koulussa 90-luvun lopussa ja 2000-luvun alussa. Ja siinä videoitiin nää jutut ja tota ihan sen oikeusturvan takia tai lähinnä oli äänityksen kannalta eli se kamera oli siinä ja kuvattiin, mutta oppilaat koki en niin ahdistavana ja mä näin että se ei niinkun toiminut lainkaan. Mä ehkä 5-6 vuotta käytin just tällästä pohjaa eli ensin luettiin teksti ja sit siin oli mun mielestä kerrottiin jostain aiheesta ja lähinnä käytin ranskassa, pitkässä ranskassa, silloin kielitaito oli aikamoisen parempi kun nyt verrattuna. Ja sit oli se parikeskustelu. Mut se aiheutti niin kovasti tuskaa ja ahdistusta et mä lopetin ne sitte.
- (15) Ääneenluku on kyllä hyvä et me tehään sitä tunnillakin aika paljon. [---] Tästä mä tykkään hirveesti et saa vapaasti kertoa ja sit et voit kertoa esimerkiksi seuraavista asioista. . Mut mul on sellasia oppilaita et tarvitsee tosi hyvät ohjeet et laittaisin nää ohjeet apukysymykset numeroituina. Ja voi olla vaikka kymmenen kohtaa mut pitää kertoa vaan viidestä, et oppilas tietää et missä vaiheessa tää tehtävä on loppu.

- (16) Ne [tehtävät] toimii just sellasissa koetilanteissa jotka väistämättä on sellasia aika muodollisia ja sit niissä on tosi vähän aikaa yleensä et sitten niinku tästä pääsee nopeesti kiinni siihen et mitä pitää tehdä. Eihän näistä synny mitään sellasta autenttista kielenkäyttöä sinäänsä koska sit siinä tosi usein tai niinku ihmiset tekee just sitä mitä heiltä pyydetään eikä ne lähe tavallaan lentoon siinä keskustelussa.
- (17) tää on joillekin lapsille tosi vaikee tällänen kerro että on hauska tavata hänet. onnittele häntä. et joidenki on hirveen vaikee et ne niinku tuijottaa tota suomenkielistä ja sit en on sillee it's nice to meet her. nii et tää on niinku et jos on oikeesti vähän vaikeeta niiin toi on jo vaikee toi tehtävänanto. et mä muuttaisin sitä silleen et sitä (....) se vois olla melkeen suora käänнос tai sit se vois olla osa silleen suoraa käänноstä ja sit silleen et on osa kolme pistettä et jatka tästä. tai sitte vihjesanoilla.
- (18) Ne parikokeet ei vaan kertakaikkiaan toiminu nii sitten mä siirryin esitelmien pitämiseen. Eli on sellanen pieni opetustuokio englanniksi.
- (19) Yks oppilas hän oli laittanu et hänel oli ollut suuri juttu se esitelmä et hän oli mennyt sinne ja voittanut itsensä. Ja se niistä aika usein nouseekin se et uskaltaa turvallisessa jutussa avata suunsa sillä kohdekielellä.
- (20) Enemmänki sillä tavalla et se on läsnä et se on jatkuvasti läsnä. joka ikisellä tunnilla on jotain suullista. Mieluummin niin että sitä on koko ajan. Et vaikka tehdään paljon suullisia harjoituksia esimerkikis vaikka puheita tai että kertoo itsestään.
- (21) Siinä tulee aina se järjestelykysymys et mitä ne kaikki muut tekee luokassa sillä aikaa. et kyl mä mielelläni pitäisin niitä mut se on haaste.
- (22) [mulla on] sellasii haastatteluja mihin oppilaat saa valmistautua etukäteen. Et he tietää kysymykset valmiiks mut ne ei saa sitten käyttää mitään avukseen. [---] Oppilaat on tykänny niistä haastatteluista kyllä paljon. Et joillekin se on ihan paras juttu koko vuodessa.
- (23) siitä esitelmästä tulee ihan normaali arvosana siis numero. Ja muistakin projekteista tulee arvosana. Mut kasiluokalla tehään sellanen ryhmäjuttu niin siitä tulee sit vaan puolikas arvosana. [---] palautekeskustelu meillä on niistä esitelmistä sitten aina suomeksi. aina, koska silloin muuten ei pääse siihen mukaan.
- (24) Sen [arvionnin] mä teen neliportaisen asteikon kautta eli on survival taso ja oli sit joku ihan tosi hyvä (.) eli siin arvioidaan just ääntämistä ja sitä et pystyykö viemään keskustelua eteenpäin. (...) sanastoa ja rakenteita myös. Mä sillee myös sellasta katon et jos mä kysyn et how are you niin muistaako ne kysyy et how about you.

- (25) Se pitää aina sitten myös miettiä tarkkaan että mikä tehtävissä on arvosteluasteikko että onks se nelosesta kymppiin (.) onks se yhestä viiteen tai yhestä kolmeen tähteä. voiko se olla jotain muutakin kuin sellasia tikapuumaisia että laitetaan oppilaat paremmuusjärjestykseen. Vai voisko se olla sellanen vahnvuustyyppinen (...) [---] se mun pointti on tässä että niitä suullisia tuotoksia tähän saakka pääasiassa on käytetty itse- ja vertaisarviointia. [---] se on jotenki ongelmallista ku voi olla et itekki jumittuu johonki väärään näkökulmaan. nii on kivempi saada useamman mielipide.
- (26) viestinnällisyys on se ensimmäinen kriteeri mut kielellinen tarkkuus tulee vasta sitten myöhemmin.
- (27) mut se käytännössä on aina silleen et on brilliant, very good, good, satisfactory ja bad, jota mä en kyl koskaan käytä. et sielt pitää mä yritän pitä huolta siitä et mä annan tosi paljon kannustavaa palautetta siitä riippumatta et millasta se on. mä yritän päästä siitä 4-10 skaalasta pois ja yleensä annan kirjallista palautetta siitä. viestinnällisyys, ääntäminen ja riippuu et puhutaanko seiskasta vai ysisstä. ja sit sisältö eli sanaston laajuus ja sit se kielellinen tarkkuus. Et minkälainen kielioppi niin lauseissa on. ja ääntämisessä nyt pitkälti se sujuvuus ja esimerkiks sanojen paino. ja niistä rakennan jonkilnaisen kokonaiskuvan ja annan kirjallista palautetta.
- (28) mut sit mul on ollu sellaset kolme et joku sujuvuus (...) eli kuinka luontevasti se tulee ja sitten ihan niinku (...) viestinnällisyys ja ääntäminen myös ja sit niistä mä oon antanu jokaisesta niinku jonkun sanallisen very good tyyppisen ja sit vielä jos ne on halunnu niin sellasen yleisarvosanan. ja sit mä oon kyl käyttäny noita eurooppalaisen viitekehyksen taitotasoasteikkoja et niitä tekstejä mä oon sitte myös antanu niille eri kokeista. koska ne on kuitenkin kohtuuymmärrettäviä ja sit on kiva et niil on joku et tällä tasolla olet. eihän ne niistä a ja b tasoista ymmärrä mut ku on ne tekstit et mitä ne osaa.
- (29) Sit esitelmistä meillä on vertaispalaute eli oppilaat arvioi toistensa esitelmiä. Ja mä tietty arvioin myös itse mut mä oon huomannu et oppilaat osaa antaa hyvää palautetta ja mä oon suurimmaks osaks samaa mieltä niistä palautteista (...) mä teen niille palautteille sit niin että mä poimin sieltä jotain kommentteja ja kirjoitan niitä ja omia kommentteja sitten sinne oppilaan wilmaan.
- (30) kyllä mun mielestä sellanen et jos on todella taitava niin sillon se ehdottomasti yleinen sujuvuus pitää olla (...) et se on helposti ymmärrettävää et tarviiks mun palata takas et mitä toi sano. mut kyl mä nyt kommunikatiivisuutta ylipäänsä kaikessa kaikkein eniten korosta. et jos on ymmärrettävä niin sillä pääsee jo pitkälle.

- (31) mulla on luokille omat google classroom kansiot ja siellä mä oon sit kirjottanu ohjeet (.) et mitä vaik jossain äänitystehtävässä pitää tehdä ja sieltä ne sit löytää ne ohjeet ja miten ne arvioidaan. ja sama niiden haastattelujen kanssa koska ne saa valmistautua siihen etukäteen et ne tietää kyllä mitä niiden pitää tehdä.
- (32) kylhän se tuntityöskentelyssä on paljon vaikeempaa ku siel ei kaikki samalla lailla pääse ääneen. kyl mä yritän sitä tehdä mut en kyl kovinkaan systemaattisesti. kyl mä jotain pistän ylös. esimerkiksi jos mä kuulen et ryhmällä tai monella ryhmän jäsenellä on vaikeuksia jonkun sanan ääntämisessä nii sellasia asioita pistän ylös ja yritän löytää aikaa sen läpikäymiseen. mut tosi paljon teen sitä et mä laitan ne tekee jotain suullista tehtävää ja sit mä kiertelen siellä ja kuuntelen samalla. mut en mitenkää korjaa niitä keskusteluita ja panen merkille tiettyjä juttuja. ja sit et aina ku on mahdollista nii yritän löytää aikaa sille suoralle palautteelle.
- (33) varmaan jotenki just et saadaan oppilaita ymmärtämään et mistä siinä on kyse. Mul on esimerkiksi sellasia oppilaita et ne yksittäin lausuu ihan hyvin mut se on sit vähän sellasta töksähtelevää se viestintä ja sit on sellasia jotka puhuu sillä omalla suomen englannin aksetilla mut ne on hirveen sujuvia et ne kuuntelee, pyytää puheenvuoroa, ottaa muut huomioon.
- (34) sillon ku ne ottaa videon tai äänittää nii pitäis (...) teroittaa niille et ihan oikeesti tää voi vaikuttaa sun numeroon et jollain uhkailulla oikeesti et tämä arvioidaan. vaik kuinka niille sanois et tää arvioidaan nii osa on silti sillee noku tää on tää äänitys.
- (35) Eli mä haluaisin kehittää tätä arviointii silleen et ois oikeesti kunnon kriteerit laaja-alaiselle osaamiselle ja oon ilmottautunu sellaseen koeryhmääinkin. Ja taitotasot ois myös tärkeit. et ois jotain konkreettista siinä arvioinnissa et mitä pitää osata.mä haluan et oppilaat kehitty silleen et se pohja on sellanen solid et ei pelkästään mitään chitchattia osata mut et pärjää sit jatko-opinnoissa, koska jos ei oo hyvää peruskielitaitoa siellä pohjalla niin mun mielestä se sit romahtaa kokonaan.
- (36) Mut jos meil ois enemmän suullisia kokeita niin voi olla et se myös motivois oppilaita niihin suullisiin harjotuksiin myös oppitunnin aikana et ne ois yhtälailla tärkeitä. [---] Mut pitää antaa kehityksen mahdollisuuksia ja ymmärtää et jos osaa jo puhua niin se ei vielä riitä et sitä puheen taitoa ja keskustelutaitoa voi aina vielä parantaa. Ja jos miettii erilaisia aksentteja ja vaikka ongelmanratkaisua et mitä sit tapahtuu. Et ku suullisen kielitaidon opettamisessa opetetaan muutakin ku sitä sanastoa.

- (37) mä haluisin et se ois jotenkin systemaattisempaa et miten mä niit käytän ja et ois jotenki selkeempää se arvionti. ja mä voisin itse tehdä enemmän selväks et mitä odotan oppilailta, ja mitä mä sit en odota heiltä. et vois olla vähemmän fiilarimeininkii. et systemaattisuutta arviontiin ja systemaattisuutta niihin suullisten kokeiden käyttöön ja et ois helpompi organisoida.
- (38) no kun mä oon vähän impulsiivinen niin mä saatan yhtäkkiä keksiä et tällänen tehtävä olis hyvä ja sit mä teen sen ja se saattaa tulla oppilaille aika yllättäen (...) niin sellanen suunnitelmallisuus olis hyväks. et vaikka jo lukuvuoden alussa miettii et millaset arvioitavat tehtävät olis tänä vuonna. ja sit voisin vaikka valmiiks ilmottaa ne siellä google classroomissa et tällaiset tehtävät teidän pitää tehdä ettei tulis sit niit yllätyksiä. ja saa sit valmistautua paremmin.